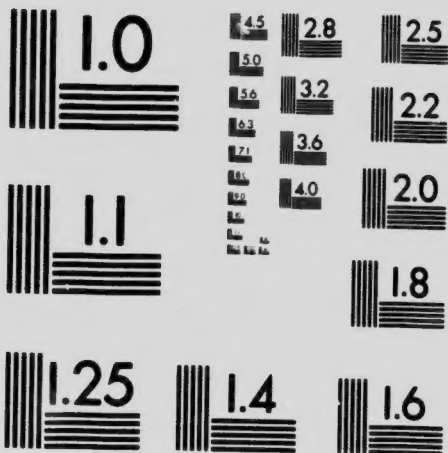




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THE RED CAP ON THE CROSS

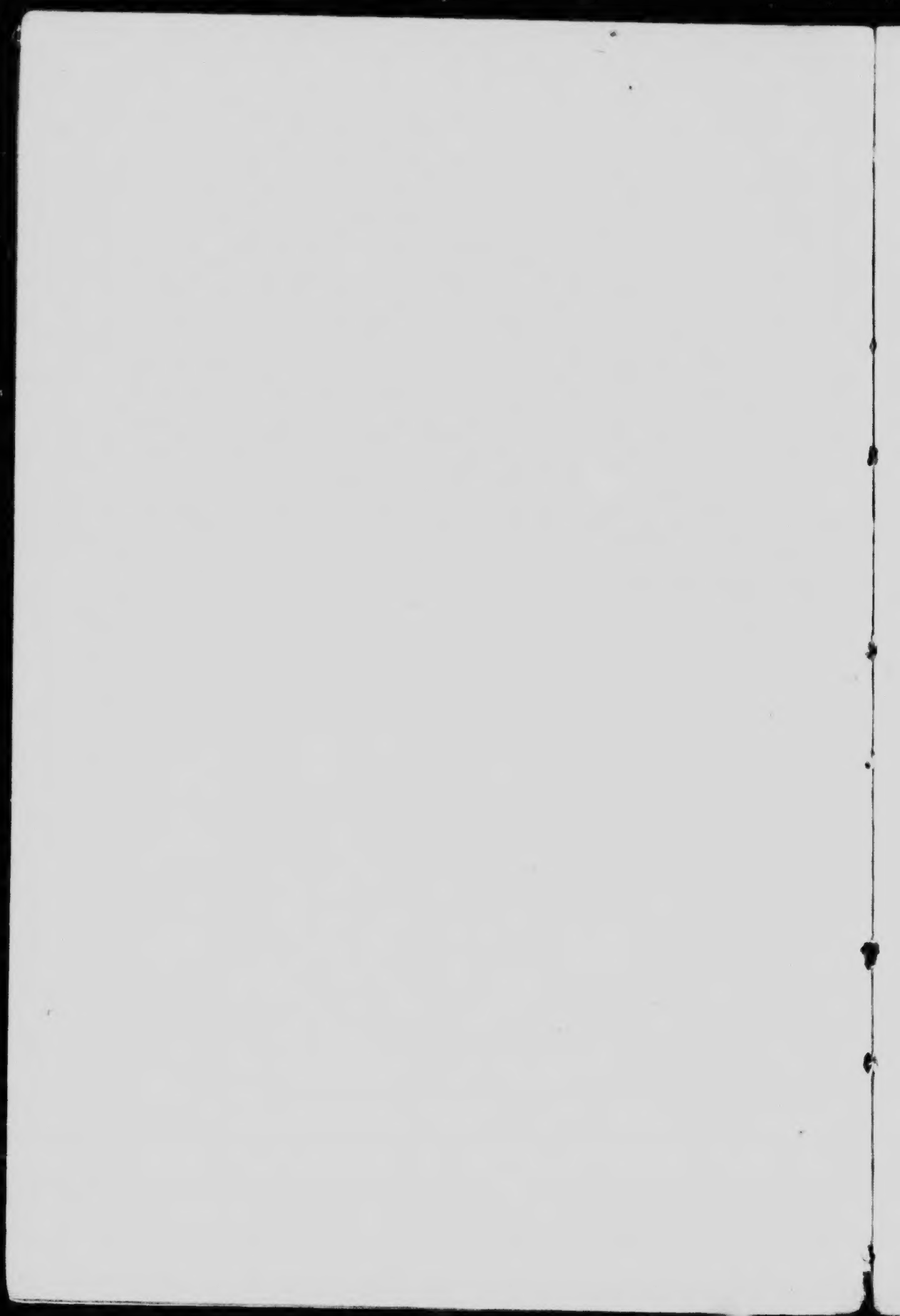


RICHARD ROBERTS

LONDON
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72 OXFORD STREET, W. 1

TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE NET

The RED CAP
on THE CROSS



THE RED CAP ON THE CROSS

BY

RICHARD ROBERTS

1918

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FOREWORD

IN this book my friend the author endeavours to give us a picture of the social and industrial conditions prevailing throughout the civilized world before and during the war. He is convinced, as many more of us are convinced, that the coming of "International Peace" will not necessarily bring peace within the nations; especially is he insistent on the fact that Russia, whatever may happen to her during the next few months, has lighted a light or set up a beacon which will be the rallying-point for the workers of the whole world. Mr. Roberts, however, is one of those who believe in the power of religion, plus material changes, as the true motive-power for bringing about a social revolution which will be satisfactory to all classes. He has studied the great French reformer Lamennais, and more than once quotes him as the prophet and seer of a new day—a day when mankind will rest its faith on love and fellowship instead of bank balances and armies and navies.

The organized Churches have at all times stoned the prophets and ranged themselves on the side of the powerful and strong. In our day, we do not find the Churches behind kings and rulers so much as we discover them backing up the commercial system with its mighty money magnates, who have displaced courts and kings as the real rulers of mankind. In every labour dispute with very few exceptions the exponents of orthodoxy are ranged on the side of the masters, and at great pains declare that as the message of the Church is to rich and

poor, it is therefore impossible for Christians to take sides. It is this negative policy which creates the divorce between organized labour and organized religion. Gold and the love of gold has usurped the power of the Cross. In the City of London we gild the towers of St. Paul's with gold, and over the Old Bailey Sessions House we have erected a figure of Justice clothed in gold, thus demonstrating to the whole world our worship of the metal for the possession of which men sacrifice honour, truth, and justice. The redemption of mankind will not be effected by a mere material change in our outlook. No sort of theory of life can save us, short of a complete self-surrender of all those things in life which hurt our neighbours and destroy our own souls; for the worst thing in modern life is not that each one of us is engaged in a struggle which injures our neighbours, but in that struggle our own souls are lost. Everything that is good and pure and holy in life is sacrificed on the altar of the golden calf.

Some people imagine our present-day problems are new. They are, in fact, as old as the hills. In the story of Cain and Abel, we are told that Cain cried out with some bitterness, "Am I my brother's keeper?" We all know how according to the story Cain failed, but we also know that, whether we like it or not, our lives and the lives of our fellow men are bound together in such a manner that we cannot live for ourselves alone, and that in very deed we are our brother's keeper; and it is the refusal of mankind to understand this which is accountable for much of the sorrow and misery of our day, and results, too, in all of us first gathering the dead-sea fruit of joylessness instead of the fruit of joy and happiness which

must come to all who strive, however humbly, to follow the light which Christ came to give the world. It is this fact which needs pressing home. We cannot live to ourselves or die to ourselves. That is the law of life which Jesus came to teach. His was no narrow creed for a sect, a class, or a race, but an all-embracing gospel of universal brotherhood which was to draw all men and women unto Him. We all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It is this fact which all the Churches must understand. Great crimes and outrages have been committed during this war by the Germans and other belligerents; but the crimes of war are as nothing to the crimes of peace—indeed, they are but dust in the balance compared with the load of sorrow and suffering which accompanies humanity from the cradle to the grave. It may well be that in days long ago much suffering and sorrow was unavoidable—men were ignorant and stupid; but to-day there is no reason why the sweating and slavery of industrial life should persist, when all around us there are the means to our hand for averting the plague and consequences of poverty. We also know enough now to understand that outraging nature's laws by sexual and other excesses brings, and must bring, its own punishment; that in these matters it is true, whether we like to admit it or no, "the sins of the fathers are visited on the children."

To whom and to what, then, shall we turn? Mr. Roberts bids us all turn once more to the Cross. In doing so, let us each bear in mind the words of Jesus: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." This is the true meaning of the

Cross, typifying for us all Life, not Death. He whom we believe was the Son of God is for us not slain, not dead, but living to give inspiration and help to all those who will turn to Him; it is this message which this book has to give. It is no fancy picture which Mr. Roberts puts before us when he tells us to think of the Red Cap on the Cross, for what is it the red cap symbolizes for those of us who to the best of our ability are striving to learn from Christ how to live? Surely it means the oneness of human life, the sacredness of each man and woman, the breaking down of all barriers, revealing mankind as neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, but one great family of one blood the world over.

Some people think the Christian religion has seen its best days. I have more faith. The services and ritual of the Anglican Church have for me a purpose and a meaning that many who read this book will not appreciate; but I can also see quite clearly that the true object of religion is to be found in the souls of men, that the divisions which send each of us into his own little sect or party are irrational and unreal. These divisions very often result in our forgetting the aims and objects our organizations are established to support, and we find ourselves more concerned for the safety of the organizations than concerned about the propagation and practice of the principles of life and conduct we profess to hold sacred. The dividing line is not in what place shall I worship God, or with what liturgy shall I praise Him, but instead, we must each discover how to serve God out in the open in our daily lives. All ways but one have been tried

We have never yet, either as individuals or as nations, tried the way laid down in the Gospels. The war has only accentuated the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of us all. The day when Peace is signed will find us still more bankrupt, unless there is a stirring of the dry bones of Christianity. Sometimes I wonder if there can be any life left in the Churches which masquerade as followers of Christ. My faith always returns when I remember the conscientious objectors, and the men, like Rupert Brooke and many a thousand more, who followed the light of conscience and went out to fight. The power of the Spirit, the tremendous power of the Cross with its emblem of love, is still the one redeeming force in the world. Those of us who profess and call ourselves Christians must shake off our lethargy, give up our comfort, our leisure, and go out with the banner of the Cross and its red cap of revolution—a revolution not of violence and bloodshed, but of mind and spirit—declaring our faith that He whose preaching attracted the common people two thousand years ago still lives, still calls to us with the same message, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." I think this is absolutely true. We modern people are much too superior, we are constantly wanting some big thing to do. Christ says to us, Come and learn of Me how to live, how to gain disciples, by doing as He did, love and give ourselves to the service of God by serving our fellow men and women. We must realize

that what we give we in reality keep, that we take we lose. The true law of life and happiness is service and giving. We are all weary and heavy laden with the cares and failures of our lives, and Christ's message is ringing down the ages calling us to turn to Him, and salvation will never come till we not only hear His message, but from our hearts cry out, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief." None of us are pure, none good, but all of us can, by accepting Christ's call, learn from Him what satisfaction and gladness in life means, for religion is the one sure means we have of securing joy and happiness in life. We may sketch all sorts of fancy schemes, endeavour to attract men by promises of legislation; in the end we shall find that the pursuit of selfish happiness—that is, the endeavour to find salvation alone, separate and by ourselves—always fails, that indeed we must each seek happiness in the happiness of others and discover the true revolution in our own hearts and consciences. We need not fear the red cap or the red flag, for both come down to us from the Cross of Christ, and are both symbols of the day "when the glory of God shall cover the earth as the water covers the sea"; and the glory of God will find its highest expression once more, as it did two thousand years ago, in the life and work of man.

I hope those who read the splendid message of Mr. Roberts will be inspired to join the growing army of those who, because of their creed, their faith in the life, death and life again of Christ, are determined to live and work for the day when the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

GEORGE LANSBURY.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE title of this volume is borrowed from a witty description of Lamennais's great psalm of Revolution, *Paroles d'un Croyant*. An apology is needed for the presumption which connects these halting pages with the flaming utterance of the French prophet; and it is hereby unreservedly made. But I may perhaps be suffered to plead in extenuation that no other title would have so precisely stated the aim of my little book. And here I would like to add that the reader will find that the book owes a good deal more than its title to Lamennais. A recent study of his writings has convinced me that there are few men, living or dead, who have a message more pertinent to the need of our time.

Some years ago I wrote a book which was published under the title *The Renascence of Faith*. In that book I argued that the signs and movements of the time justified the hope that we were about to enter upon a new age of faith. I did not anticipate that the world was first to be engulfed in the terrible calamity of a great war, though (so easy is it to be wise after the event) I now perceive how inevitably certain of the circumstances which I passed under review were tending towards this unspeakable tragedy. Nevertheless, I believe that the general thesis of *The Renascence of Faith* still holds good, despite the war; and this present volume is intended to be in some sort a postscript to it.

But its aim is more specific. It assumes that the dominating fact of the present moment is the proletarian rising which has begun in Russia, and

of which there are plain signs in every country of Western Europe. This movement may in a comparatively short time work such changes throughout Western civilization as to render the political adjustments which will be made at the end of the war as archaic and obsolete as pre-war conditions appear to-day. What are we going to do about it?

While I have in these pages confined myself to the spiritual and moral conditions of the creation of a new society, I should like to be permitted to say that I believe its economic framework must take some such shape as that described by the advocates of "national guilds."

RICHARD ROBERTS

January 1918.

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PROLOGUE

FROM LUTHER TO LENINE

I.—THE COURSE OF CIVILIZATION

NEWMAN once delivered a course of lectures on the Turks which are still worth reading for the sake of a theory of civilization which he proposes in them. He sets out with the antithesis that "barbarous nations live in a common imagination . . . whereas civilized states live in some common object of sense." Civilization is, accordingly, the process by which society passes from a state in which it is held together by an object of the imagination, such as "religion, true or false, the divine mission of the sovereign or the dynasty, historical fame," to a state in which it is sustained by a common devotion to some object of sense, "secular interests, country, home, protection of person and property." Newman explains the transition in this way: "Taking man as he is, we shall commonly find him dissatisfied with a demonstrative process from an undemonstrated premiss; and when once he has begun to reason, he will seek to prove the point from which the reasoning starts as well as that at which it arrives. Then he will be forced back from immediate first principles to others more remote, nor will he be satisfied till he ultimately reaches those that are as much within his own handling and mastery as the reasoning apparatus itself. Hence it is that civilized states ever tend to substitute objects of sense for the

objects of imagination as the basis of their existence."

Despite this analysis, Newman curiously had little fault to find with civilization. He acknowledges that it lacks the "supernatural grace" which only "can raise man towards the perfection of his nature." Yet even without the cultivation of the spiritual nature, it is possible "in some sort to combine the other faculties of man into one and to progress forward, with the substitution of natural religion for faith, and a refined expediency or propriety for true morality, just as with practice a man might manage without an arm or without sight, and as the defect of one organ is sometimes supplied to a certain extent by the preternatural action of another." One wonders whether, had Newman lived to see this day, he would have looked upon the processes of civilization with so great complacency.

Edward Carpenter describes civilization as a "historical stage whose commencement dates roughly from the division of society into classes founded upon property and the adoption of class government." Engels points out the connection of the appearance of a merchant-class with the growth of civilization. Whether Newman's account of the transition is sound or not—and it is probable that he exaggerates the part played in it by conscious ratiocination—it is plain that society does pass from a primary state of devotion to objects of imagination to an ultimate state governed by the "economic" motive. But Newman seemingly failed to perceive that when a society is held together by a common pursuit of objects of sense, it has reached its term.

"In no case" says Edward Carpenter after citing instances, "has any nation come through and passed this stage; but in most cases it has succumbed soon after the main symptoms had been developed."

II.—FROM FAITH THROUGH SCEPTICISM TO MATERIALISM

To put it summarily, a civilization (according to Newman) passes through three stages: the first, of faith; the second, of analysis and scepticism; the third and last, of materialism.

It would take us too far afield to inquire how far Newman's theory is universally valid, but we may observe how closely it fits the case of the modern world.

It is now four hundred years since Luther nailed the Ninety-five Theses to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg; and the echo of his hammer has been much fainter than, even amid these assaults and alarms of war, it ought to have been. For, so far as it is possible to fix a point of time for so great a happening, the modern world began with the Theses. A principle had emerged from the decaying welter of the Middle Ages which unlocked the door of a new world. The Protestant Reformation was indeed a good many things; but before anything else it was a revival of religion. That it finally established the modern tradition of the "national state," and is so far the source of much of the weal and woe which followed the new political divisions of Christendom, is not of so much conse-

quence as its central affirmation of the doctrine of personal autonomy in matters of faith. Through this doctrine, the spiritual universe was in some sort rediscovered; the supernatural gained a fresh reality, a hitherto unknown immediacy; and the Reformation shaped itself in its early stages as a great resurgence of spiritual life. It was, indeed, no new thing that had come into the world—but an old thing, stated with an accent and with a power which the need of the time called for; and those who accepted it pressed with a joyful violence into an astonishing land of enlarged life and unexpected experience.

But after the age of faith came the age of scepticism—the *sæculum rationalisticum*. This was the period of English Deism, of the Aufklärung, and of the Encyclopædia; and its effect was to disintegrate the religious synthesis which began with the Reformation. Belief in the validity of revealed religion was undermined; and the new world of faith that had been thrown open in the sixteenth century had become doubtful and unsure by the beginning of the eighteenth. The Methodist Revival came too late to arrest the decomposition; all it succeeded in doing was to give the dwindling faith in a supernatural order a local revival without materially checking the general drift towards the ascendancy of "objects of sense."

The third age followed—the *sæculum realisticum*, the age of *things*; and it was fitly borne in upon the heaving flood of the Industrial Revolution. From that time the modern world has capitulated increasingly to "objects of sense," and life has

been materialized to an extent and a depth hitherto unknown. It is true that the nineteenth century has been marked by many notable achievements and much progress was made in the humanities. Nations were delivered from ancient bondage and set up on their own account ; slaves were set free ; the area of political freedom was extended ; these and many more good things. But these things were the belated outcrops of a previous tradition rather than the achievements of the prevailing spirit. The nineteenth century, especially in its later unfoldings, was pre-eminently an age of commercialism : the economic motive became paramount. Mind was given over to the pursuit of scientific invention and technical achievement, and in due course subordinated to the purposes of commerce and war ; and the spirit of the century came to its most appropriate and inevitable climax in the world-wide expansion of that commercial imperialism, which has chiefly governed the external relations of states, and more than any other single cause is accountable for this present lapse into barbarism.

So the age has come full cycle. Allowing for an occasional parenthesis of spiritual recovery and a few scattered cases of idealism, the period which began with the Reformation has run its course from faith through scepticism to materialism ; and it is winding up its bankrupt affairs in this inferno of blood and tears. The world that was born in 1517 is being buried before our eyes in a tragical setting of destruction and death ; and it is being buried beyond resurrection.

III.—THE NEW FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

It is of course impossible to delimit in a summary way the historical frontiers of an epoch. The Reformation was as much a result as a beginning: and while it is legitimate to mark out certain broad periods as having been characterized by this or that particular tendency, it is necessary to remember the principle of historical continuity which links one generation to another without any real break. The roots of a new tradition are already present in the old; and this is the energy—partly a development out of the past, and for the rest a reaction from it—which pressing and working for its own release disintegrates and shatters the existing synthesis. Is it possible to perceive through the dust and smoke and darkness of this ruined world, the principle which is to shape and govern the affairs of men in the time before us?

The Protestant affirmation of individual liberty in the religious sphere paved the way for its establishment in other regions. It is a historical commonplace how the struggle for civil liberty in modern times has grown out of the experience of spiritual liberty. Imperfectly and only partially discerned, yet the principle of religious freedom became in the Puritan and the Pilgrim the real source of the movement which has extended, through generation after generation, the area of civil freedom; and of this movement the French Revolution was the terrific climax. Mazzini held rightly that the French Revolution was the political translation of the Protestant Reformation, the affirmation in the

political sphere of that liberty which the Reformation proclaimed in the realm of religion; and when we remember that the spiritual background of the intellectual father of the French Revolution, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, was Genevan Protestantism, Mazzini's generalization would appear to be not ill-founded. Following the French Revolution came (despite occasional reactions) the extended application of the principle of political liberty to nations and to individuals. It has been said that the nineteenth century was the century of nationality; it was no less the century of democracy. In the great mid-century struggles for emancipation, the nationalist ideal was hardly distinguishable from the democratic. But while the area of political liberty was thus being extended, a new problem was being created by the growth of commercial and industrial individualism. A new tyranny and a new form of subjection appeared; and we are now at the beginning of a conflict to extend the principle of liberty into a third sphere, namely, the *economic*. The Protestant Reformation abolished the vested interests of a priestly caste; the French Revolution abolished the vested interests of a political caste; a revolution is already afoot which will abolish the vested interests of an economic caste—that social synthesis which is called “capital.” Religious liberty was affirmed against privilege resting upon an alleged monopoly of grace; political liberty was affirmed as against privilege resting upon birth; the new liberty will be affirmed against privilege resting upon property.

This is, at this moment, no mere speculation;

for the struggle has already begun. This is the significance of the Russian Revolution. What has happened in Russia is not an old-time political upheaval ; the overthrow of the old order was simply an incident in the overthrow of economic privilege. This is a new thing in the world ; for the first time a disinherited class has gained an ascendancy not alone over an aristocracy (for that has often happened before) but over a *bourgeoisie* as well. A proletariat is in possession ; and its mind is to set up a new order of economic equality. This event may turn out to be the third great crisis of modern history, the first act in the drama of economic emancipation.

IV.—THE LEAVEN IN THE LUMP

Nor is the Russian Revolution an isolated episode out of relation to the prevailing tendencies in the rest of the world. Industrial unrest was epidemic throughout Europe before the war ; and the war has served to give it a unity and a definition which it did not previously possess. Lord Northcliffe, who has not been distinguished by his proletarian sympathies, told an American interviewer a little time ago that the war would be followed by "the greatest social revolution in British history, greater even than Magna Charta, the Civil War, or the Reform Bill of 1832." But it is altogether sure that Lord Northcliffe has no understanding of the dimensions and depth of the forces which are making for the revolution he foresees. Mr. Bert Moses, a keen and shrewd American observer, a leading figure in

the advertising world, has recorded his conviction in these terms—

Getting back to where I started—to the New York election—the amazing vote cast for Hillquit, the Socialist, may be a strong indication of the drift of the world toward Socialism. Personally, I believe that Socialism, rather than democracy, is going to sweep over the earth much sooner after the war ends than most folks imagine.

If you think, when the war ends, the world is going to be what it was early in 1914, your mind is not in good working order. Socially, commercially, and intellectually changes of such magnitude are coming that you will have to get an introduction to yourself to recognize your own name, and you will hardly be able to identify your home city or town. Put your ear to the ground and you can hear the distant rumble of footsteps echoing across the world—footsteps of the followers of Hillquit in New York and Hillquits all over the globe. Get ready for big surprises. Prepare for great changes. They are just over the horizon—just around the corner. This isn't one man's opinion. Millions of men in both hemispheres are consumed with this idea. They believe in Socialism with a fanaticism that waxes mightily. I am simply recording in cold blood the march of events past the grandstand.

Mr. John Hill, a fraternal delegate from the British Trade Union Congress, said to the convention of the American Federation of Labour at Buffalo on November 15, 1917—

That this war generally arises out of the imperialistic efforts of kings and emperors for a larger portion of the earth's surface in the capitalist interests, to control an even larger proportion of the production of the workers' toil, and that all nations shared in the responsibility of this war; that below all intrigues are the capitalist interests, and unless we

emancipate ourselves from the domination of capitalism there will be no real democracy after the war, is the position of the English workers.

Nor is it in England only or chiefly that even these things are being said. They are the common-places of radical utterance in France and Italy; and despite the shroud of mystery that hides from us the inner life of Germany to-day, there are unmistakable signs that Liebknecht is no voice in the wilderness when he says—as he did at his trial—

The present war is not a war for the protection of national integrity, nor for the freeing of oppressed people, nor for the welfare of the masses.

It signifies from the standpoint of the proletariat the most extreme concentration and extension of political oppression, of economic exploitation, of militaristic slaughtering of the working-classes, body and soul, for the advantage of capitalism and despotism.

To all this the working-classes of all countries can give only one answer: intensified struggle—international class struggle against the capitalistic regime and the ruling classes of all countries for the abolition of every species of oppression and exploitation, for the termination of war through the institution of a peace consistent with the spirit of Socialism. In this class struggle the Socialist, who knows no country but the International, must come to the defence of everything which he as a Socialist is bound to defend.

Perhaps the most eloquent footnote to these words of Liebknecht is this message which I take from that grim essay in realism, Henri Barbusse's *Under Fire*—

Bertrand used to speak very little ordinarily and never of himself. But he said: "I've got three of them on my

hands. I struck like a madman. Ah, we were all beasts when we got here!"

He raised his voice and there was a restrained tremor in it. "It was necessary," he said, "it was necessary for the future's sake."

He crossed his arms and tossed his head. "The future!" he cried all at once as a prophet might. "How will they regard this slaughter, they who'll live after us, to whom progress—which comes sure as fate—will at last restore the poise of their conscience? How will they regard these exploits which even we who perform them don't know whether one should compare them with those of Plutarch's and Corneille's heroes or with those of hougans and apaches?"

"And for all that, mind you," Bertrand went on, "there is one figure that has risen above the war and will blaze with the beauty and strength of his courage. . . ."

I listened, leaning on a stick and towards him, drinking in the voice that came in the twilight silence from the lips that so rarely spoke. He cried with a clear voice, "*Liebknecht*."

This is the leaven which is heaving and panting in the lump to-day beneath the exterior chaos of the war. The lineaments of the movement are unmistakable; and it is gathering volume daily. And the issue, what is that to be?

The wars of religion came to an end long ago; this is assuredly the last of the politico-dynastic wars—if only for the reason that the politico-dynastic interests that led up to it have already become irrelevant. The nation-consciousness is in process of being effaced by a class-consciousness which reaches out far and wide beyond the territorial divisions of mankind. Are we then beginning an era of economic wars—wars in which the old vertical division of nationality will be replaced by the horizontal divisions of class?

A revolution is at hand ; but when it comes, will it be a dance of death or a pageant of life ?

This is the problem which the Christian Church has to face. It is confronted with the alternative—*new wars or a new religious synthesis*. Has it a word with which to face the tremendous emergencies that are at hand ?

CHAPTER I

THE DISINHERITED

I.—THE SCHISM OF THE AGES

THE struggle for liberty has always been essentially an endeavour to broaden the basis of human fellowship, to enlarge the area of opportunity and privilege; and the destructive aspects of the struggle have been subsidiary and incidental to this positive purpose. Luther sought to bring the disinherited layman into his own; the French Revolution brought the disinherited citizen into his own; Mazzini fought for the unity and independence of a disinherited people. The mainspring of all organized opposition to constituted authority is to be found in the sense of disinheritance and unjust disability; and the great historical rebels have been simply men of larger social vision than their orthodox contemporaries. Like Jesus, they saw the multitude, "scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd," distressed and overborne by the predatory self-regard of the privileged classes. "Rousseau," says Lord Morley, "had seen the wrongs of the poor not from without but from within, not as a pitying spectator but as of their own company," and that was how "he by and by brought such fire to the attack of the old order and changed the blank practice of the older philosophers into a deadly affair of ball and shell." Similarly, Professor Dowden has said of Shelley that "it was the sufferings of the industrious poor that especially claimed his sympathy, and he thought

of publishing for them a series of popular songs which should inspire them with heart and hope." It has, moreover, been characteristic of the rebel that he had not only a heart for the misery of the disinherited but a profound faith in their power to redeem themselves. Robert Owen went so far—despairing of the State as an instrument of social regeneration—as to preach a doctrine of political indifferentism and started the co-operative movement in the faith that the common people had it in them to work out their own salvation without the aid of statecraft. Lamennais, disappointed in the Monarchy and the Church, at last gave himself over wholly to the direct appeal to the people. John Ball's doggerel, John Wyclif's tracts and "poor preachers," Hus's appeal to the Bohemians, the practice of public preaching at the Reformation, Pascal's *Provincial Letters*, John Brown's quaint tract for negroes, each of these was in its own way a call to the disinherited to claim their inheritance, and was born of the faith that the multitude had only to press its claim in order to win it. And at last, though there be many vicissitudes by the way, that pressure is not to be withstood. The crusade of freedom does not move continuously and simultaneously along the whole front. The Bible of Liberty is written slowly, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little. At this point or that, in every age, the disinherited have swept over the barricades of privilege; and the sovereign fact of these times is that a disinherited class is getting ready for the heaviest and farthest-flung offensive yet undertaken against the monopolies

which deny it its just share of the joy and the fullness of life.

"The poor," said Jesus, "ye have always with you." Indeed we have; and their masters too. The top-dog and the under-dog have ever been here. The fabric of the Greek city with all its fine boasting of liberty rested upon the subordination of a slave class. Disraeli once spoke of the "two nations" that inhabited England. There were the governing classes and the governed; and the governed were governed in the interests of their governors. On the one hand, tyrannies, despotisms, oligarchies and plutocracies; on the other, chattel-slavery and serfdom, villenage and wage-servitude; there the privileged few; here the disinherited many—this schism has been the ancient curse of our race.

II.—TOP-DOG AND UNDER-DOG

The case of the disinherited man of to-day differs in more than one way from that of his historical ancestors. He is not concerned with his disabilities as a layman, or as a citizen, or as a member of a subject nation. He has largely ceased to be interested in religion; and his concern in politics, whether national or international, is dominated by one fact—namely, that he conceives of himself primarily as a working-man denied his due share of the product of his toil, compelled to live from hand to mouth, possessing no fixity of tenure, liable to lose his job at the caprice of another man. This condition he calls wage-slavery; and he is justified in so calling it, since it puts him and his family at the mercy of

an irresponsible master against whose decree there is no appeal. It will serve little purpose at this time of day to say dark and stormy things about the social revolutionary. This thing is not to be killed with the mouth. If the privileged class were wise in its day, it would try to make terms with this adversary "while it is in the way with him." But historical precedent does not encourage us to look for such wisdom. On the contrary, the privileged classes will show fight, and they will be beaten; and they will by no means come out of their defeat till they have paid the uttermost farthing.

Some one has said that the only real agitator is injustice; and if there is any social ferment about, it must have a real cause. It is the part of the wise man to regard it as the symptom of some organic disease in the body politic and to endeavour to diagnose the trouble. Nor is it ever difficult for a candid mind to reach the seat of the disease. The spiritual inwardness of labour unrest is a demand for a larger life; and this demand has been set afoot by education. An educated proletariat is not going to be a contented or submissive proletariat. On the contrary, the stirring of thought, the acquisition of knowledge, the broadening of outlook—the natural sequels of education—stir restlessness, an ill-understood demand for expansion, a craving for more elbow-room. Education liberates within men a large imperious appetite for "more life and fuller." And if the worker, in his newly-awakened sense of larger possibilities of self-fulfilment, formulates this demand in economic terms, of whom did he learn the lesson? Have not his masters by their

own example been sedulously teaching him this long time that a larger life is an affair of more things, more money, more leisure, more creature comfort? The proletariat and the plutocracy are children of the same age and naturally they use the same idiom; but the proletarian has learned to use it more confidently because the plutocrat has used it so loudly and so ostentatiously in his presence.

The consequences of the existing individualistic organization of society need no recapitulation here; and they have formed the staple of benevolent conversation for a long time. A great many truisms have been said about the evils of competition; and the slum and its miseries have evoked an abundant compassion. Sober Church courts have gone on record again and again in the last few years that the first charge upon the proceeds of an industry is the just remuneration of those engaged in it. But nothing is happening, save local and sporadic attempts to alleviate the miseries of the poor and to countervail the worst effects of the "system." The pious opinions of ecclesiastical bodies and the sympathetic commonplaces of the compassionate are after all so much "blank practice"; they do not touch the evil heart of the business or bring the practical remedy into the programme of the politician. The new fact that we have to face to-day is that the worker has made up his mind to smash the system. If he is crying out for Socialism, it is less to preach an economic theory than to oppose a new ideal to an old tradition. He has gained at last a sense of the measure of his power. He is no longer disposed to go bargaining with the employer for this

minor concession or that ; the cap-in-hand attitude has become obsolete. The worker is getting ready to lay the axe at the root of the tree—this " system," the logic of which works out at once in the luxury of the rich and the misery of the poor.

Robert Owen's doctrine of political indifferentism would fall on deaf ears to-day. The awakened working-class knows that the radical upheaval toward which it is looking requires the capture of the political machine. The legislatures of the world are composed of the prosperous and well-to-do who have a keener and more consistent scent for their own class-interests than for the bodies and souls of living men. The rights of property take precedence over the rights of humanity. The political scales—as things are to-day—are heavily weighted in favour of the privileged and propertied classes. Beneath their public controversies, the traditional political groups in every land are united in an unholy alliance in defence of the *status quo*. Only the other day the British Government proposed to grant a royalty—a free gift—to landowners upon all the petroleum which it was able to extract from their estates ; and the fact that this piece of flagrant class-legislation was defeated is itself a sign of the changing attitude to property. The habitual outlook of the conventional political mind was well illustrated by the conversation of an American public man in an interview not long ago. The talk had turned on the man who worked with a pick for a dollar and a half a day.

" Do you know why that man can't make more money ? It's up here," and he pointed to his forehead. " It's the

shape of his brain. It's fatality. God Almighty did that, and you can't change it. You're challenging Providence. Distribute all the wealth in the country with absolute equality, and what would happen within a year? It would all be back in the same hands."

"Let's waive the question of grown-up men," I said, "and take children. They at least ought to have equal opportunity."

"Do you mean to tell me," said he, "that the child of the poorest farmer or the poorest factory-hand in New England hasn't just as good a chance to go to school and get an education and become a bank director or railroad president as J. P. Morgan?"

"I certainly do," I said. "Very few finish grammar school. Take your Bureau of Labour statistics. Take the report of your Public Health Service, which shows that less than half of the adult male wage-earners in this country were earning enough to support their families in decency and comfort."

"It's their own fault," said he. "This is the freest and finest country God ever made. Your quarrel is with God. You have a perverted view of these things. If that's the stuff you're preaching, I think you're probably doing more harm than good."

"God never intended that a man should be allowed to grow rich just from the ownership of land that others worked," I suggested.

"As a landowner, you can't expect me to believe that," he said.

Between the Kaiser and this gentleman, God seems to have a good deal to answer for; but the tragedy of the situation is that a man in high administrative position should have no other answer to the rising ferment of social revolt than this salad of ancient platitudes. "As a landowner"—that is plainly the ground-plan of this man's theology, his ultimate court of appeal respecting the divine

government of the world, and, we may be sure, the touchstone of his political conduct. For all this kind of ineptitude there is preparing a rough arousal. Before many years are gone, the affairs of state will be—in most of the countries of Europe, at least—in the hands of the man who has something wrong with “the shape of his brain.”

III.—THE GOAL OF THE NEW INSURGENCY

For it must be remembered that the sense of disability and disinheritance has created in the working-classes a new and profound sense of unity. “Labour” is to-day a solidarity in a hitherto unknown sense; of recent years this solidarity has become increasingly international, a process not suppressed but only interrupted by the war. The war has only served to aggravate the conditions out of which this solidarity sprang in the first instance. It is well known that, had not the war intervened, England was about to find itself in the autumn of 1914 in the grip of the fiercest industrial conflict in its history. The struggle has been deferred only to become more intense and more decisive. It is possible that its venue may be changed from the yards and the shops to the floor of the House of Commons; but the issue cannot be evaded. The recent Report of the Commission on Labour Unrest furnished instructive reading: “The unrest is real, widespread, and in some directions extreme; and such as to constitute a national danger unless dealt with promptly and effectively. We are at this

moment within view of a possible social upheaval or at least extensive and manifold strikes." The high prices of food, the exploits of the "profiteers," the administration of the Military Service and the Munitions Acts, the harsh treatment of conscientious objectors, encroachments on the right of free speech, over-fatigue, bad housing conditions in munition-making areas—these are some of the aggravating circumstances recorded by the Commissioners. These things have combined to create so formidable a unity of the British working-classes that it is beyond any question that we are already face to face with the controlling fact in the future of British politics. And, existing as it does over against that solidarity which is conveniently described as "capital," this unity is shaping itself into a class-consciousness which is as distinct and as definite as the nation-consciousness, and which threatens—for good or evil—to break it down and supersede it.

This class-consciousness, like the nation-consciousness, has originated in the need of unity in self-defence against predatory neighbours; and in its early stages its expression was largely confined to the meaner and minor tactics of self-defence. The "ca' canny" policy and other restrictions upon output which were imposed by the Trade Unions were no more than the experimental pin-pricks of insurgent juvenility. But that stage is long past; we are now in a period of large-scale strategy; almost certainly at the beginning of a planned and calculated offensive *en masse*. The outlook of "labour" is already many times broader than it was a decade ago; and its unity is more organic. It is gradually

working a change in the character and quality of its leadership. The old-time labour leader is becoming more and more of a survival; the guerilla chief is being superseded by the statesman. And most notable of all is a perceptible change of temper. While the class sense is more definite than ever, it is less truculent and more good-humoured. This may be born of a new confidence—the terms of the conflict are more equal, and victory is nearer. But it is chiefly the result of the new *camaraderie*, the humanizing and broadening effect of a fellowship constantly increasing in extent and in devotion to a common purpose.

But to what goal is this mighty host moving? One thing may be said here with some confidence. The objective is not socialism—that is, socialism of the old orthodox Marxian type. Certainly in England, Marxian Socialism has received its *coup de grâce* during the war. This may so far sound comforting to the rich and prosperous; but the comfort is not very substantial. The goal is not changed; it is only the economic doctrine that is in process of change. And that indeed is, as yet, far from finally formulated. The extreme dogma of state-ownership and state-control was a recoil from the extravagances of nineteenth-century individualism; but the experience of English labour during the war, where state-ownership and state-control have been in wide operation, has supplied a necessary corrective by revealing the inherent dangers of wholesale centralization. What the economic formula will be is, however, of less consequence than the spirit of the movement. The early temper of suspicious

self-defence has been transformed into the generous dream of a comparative commonwealth ; and what has to be reckoned with is not a formula or a doctrine but an idealism and a religion. Its gospel is a call to the making of a new world in which the charmed circle of opportunity shall be open, and the prescriptive right of self-fulfilment shall be secured to every man. The transition may turn out to be very unpleasant to those who have been favoured and fortunate hitherto ; for old usages cannot be changed without hardship to those who have a vested interest in them. But the new spirit is not to be denied or stayed until another—and perhaps the last—barricade which men have erected to keep out their fellows from their native heritage of opportunity, that privilege which rests upon property, shall have been abolished.¹

The strategy of the attack will vary according to circumstances. In autocratic Russia, it took the form of a *coup d'état*, for there was no other way. In democratic countries, it will move along constitutional lines and endeavour to lay hold of the machinery of government. But whether in this way or in that, a revolution is at hand which is to determine the course of the world for centuries to come. The worker has come in sight of the promised land, and by hook or by crook he is going to enter in to possess it.

But what will he make of it when he has got it ?

¹ Not property in itself, be it noted ; but the privilege which property gives in the modern organization of society, the supposed right of property to receive unearned profit out of the labour of others.

CHAPTER II

NEW CLOTHES OR A NEW BODY?

I.—THE MELTING-POT

IT is necessary that we should try at this point to examine the social order which is threatened with disruption. Perhaps it would be truer to say that it is already in process of disruption; for amid the multitudinous uncertainty of these days the one thing that is not at all uncertain is that the pre-war social synthesis has already been broken up beyond repair. The war is the end of an epoch. It is not merely the state-system of Europe that is tottering to its fall, but the habit of a generation. The way of life, the mode of thought, the scale of values of an age are gathered up and condemned in one resounding and bloody judgment. It is indeed very little of the old world that we shall carry over into the new; and it is better so.

But we shall require to re-examine—and probably to throw overboard—a good many of our preconceptions before our minds get into proper working order for the business of shaping this new world that is to be. For while we are all more or less sedulously preparing our minds for great changes, we are still thinking of them as coming *within the old framework*. We are going to put new flesh on the old skeleton; and no doubt while we are in the process of transition, some parts of the old skeleton will be useful. But we must, all the same, be prepared to realize that the implied programme of the coming revolution is not that of building up new

flesh around the old skeleton, but of providing a new skeleton as well. The traditional political and economic acceptances are already in the melting-pot. The British War Ministry has taken such liberties with that ancient sanctity, "the British Constitution," as to alter it almost beyond recognition; and this is likely to prove a fruitful precedent. The "state" before which the orthodox political philosophers of Western Europe, Professor Bosanquet of Oxford no less than Treitschke, had bidden us bow in religious awe, is—thanks chiefly to the Germans—coming out of the war a very bedraggled divinity. Many hoary dogmas of statecraft have been put under a moratorium by the exigencies of an urgent military situation; and some of them will probably remain in their present obscurity for good. That is so far an advantage; there will be so much less dead timber to be carted away.

But it is not enough. The truth of the matter is that changes much deeper than changes in the character and working of existing political institutions must take place if those hopes, which we may reasonably attach to the new rising life of the people, are to be realized. Our political institutions and economic "laws" are after all derivative things, characteristic growths out of the soil of common life. "What is radically vicious," said Lamennais in 1825, "never reforms itself. I do not speak here of the forms of government, a question which absorbs men's minds to-day, perhaps because it is the most fruitless. Society is dying; and they are disputing about the clothes with which to cover it, so clear is it that the disease is in its clothes." And with the same

clear-eyed analysis, he writes a little later, "It is necessary to lay in advance the foundations of a new society; the old is rotten; it is dead and it cannot be raised again. . . . Our work lies in the creation of peoples." What Lamennais perceived clearly was that the public evils of his time were symptoms of a social disease that no political revolution could remedy. The seat of the disorder was in a region which political action could not touch. And similarly in our day, economic readjustments and political changes, however necessary, are not of themselves likely to take us materially nearer the co-operative commonwealth. The end of capitalistic exploitation is not necessarily the dawn of the millennium; it may quite easily be the beginning of a new kind of tyranny. Society needs a new body before it needs new clothes.

II.—CIVILIZATION ?

An English periodical some time ago had a good deal to say about "the spiritual treasures of a great civilization"; but unfortunately it did not pause in the flow of its eloquence to tell us precisely what these were. We were left guessing. Mr. Bernard Shaw tells us (and though his opinions are often perverse, his facts have a habit of being most uncomfortably correct) that in England one person in five dies in a poorhouse, or a public hospital, or a madhouse; we know that nine-tenths of the wealth of the country goes into the pockets of one-tenth of the population. "Since the war began," said

a writer in the *Quarterly Review* (October 1917), speaking of Great Britain, "there has been an avoidable waste of the lives of a quarter of a million children." "The killed," says the *London Observer*, commenting upon this statement, "are all babies under the age of five and chiefly children of the poorer classes. They die, as Lord Rhondda puts it roundly, at the rate of about a thousand a week. The principal causes are slums and over-crowding, dirt and bad air, and the consequent diseases; shortage of competent midwife and nursing; sheer ignorance on the part of young mothers whose school training and chances afterwards had never fitted them for intelligent maternity; and last but not least, insufficient nourishment with pure milk and other right food. So they die." It is surely time we had done with this sonorous cant about "the spiritual treasures of a great civilization,"—a civilization which has no more sense than to go on committing suicide in this way by its incorrigible ineptitude and ignorance, and what lies at last beneath these things, its insatiable greed of wealth. In point of fact we hear very little about the blessings of civilization in the common talk of the east side of New York or in a South Wales colliery village. This kind of dithyrambic clatter is confined to the comfortable classes. It is the folk who live sheltered lives in conditions of ease and security far away from the racket of the common world and academic persons who think in abstractions in a seclusion unruffled by the harsh brutalities of our social system who become ecstatic about civilization. Not the slum dweller, nor the average working-man,

who is for the most part condemned to drab and monotonous conditions of life from which the only escape too often is the public-house, and to a dreary routine of toil which often does not provide the materials of a reasonable subsistence. The test of a civilization does not consist in vague "spiritual treasures," but in the kind of men it makes, and the kind of life it provides for them; and the crime of modern civilization is that it makes, as Ruskin said long ago, everything but men.

This thing that we call civilization, what is it? Edward Carpenter regards it as a disease—in which he is not altogether fair. Newman, on the other hand—perhaps because he lived too early to see clearly whither the logic of contemporary civilization was leading—tells us that "aims, rules, views, habits, projects, prudence, foresight, observation, inquiry, invention, resource, resolution, and perseverance are its characteristics. Justice, benevolence, expedience, propriety, religion, are its recognized, its motive principles. Supernatural truth is its sovereign law." Carpenter and Newman differ in their estimate of civilization because they are looking at it from different sides. Civilization, like every other human thing, is a wild tangle of good and evil.

III.—THE SCRAP-HEAP AND THE SHAMBLES

Civilization clearly begins with the *civis*, the citizen, the dweller in the city. Folk who live in cities have to master the art of living together.

They learn that there are concessions which they must needs make one to another in the interests of a quiet life. Of course men lived together before they lived in cities ; but the problems of living together became more acute and pressing in the more concentrated society of the city. The processes by which sharp corners were rubbed down and idiosyncrasies moderated were correspondingly accentuated. Gradually a set of recognized limitations takes shape, and a kind of social order is developed, a system of mutual accommodations in self-defence. With this comes a certain refinement of speech and bearing which contrasts sharply with the uncouth habit of the rustic. The town dweller has become *civil* or *urbane* (both of which words mean simply *townish*). That seems to be the beginning of civilization.

This process was of course all to the good. Men must live together if they are to make the best of themselves and of each other. And so long as civilization was a spontaneous growth out of the native human need of a social existence, it had the promise of evolution. It was a living thing ; and living things can grow. But civilization like many another promising child grew no better as it grew bigger. This is not to say that civilization has not preserved much of its original spontaneity ; and in so far as it has done so, it is a treasure of untold wealth. But a subtle change crept over it. It ceased to be an organism and became an organization. The plant was transformed into a system. The initial spontaneity of social conduct was superseded by the formality of legal obligation. Civili-

zation as we know it in history rests upon an intricate framework of checks and arrests and restraints, formally and legally defined, and buttressed by a scheme of pains and penalties, by which the human animal is kept within bounds and by which the human spirit is tied down to a hopeless mediocrity of aspiration and achievement. This is the state of things that the French writers of the eighteenth century describe so aptly in the phrase "*nations policées*," which is their substitute for "civilized nations."

It may be that the development of the institution of property had to do with this process of "police-manizing"; but property is not the only sanctity which is imperilled by human waywardness. We may well believe that something of this kind would have happened even though human nature were wholly innocent of inordinate acquisitiveness. In any case, this framework appears to have become and is still to be necessary. For without it we should now fall apart into a wild anarchy in which we should lose ourselves and one another. At all costs we must hang together. Let us at the same time harbour no illusions as to the kind of social order which is secured in this way. It is at best a precarious equilibrium resting upon a nice balance of centrifugal and centripetal forces; and how unstable it is, the daily tale of lawlessness, recorded in the Press, bears continual witness. Our self-regarding instincts are essentially disruptive; and such social solidarity as we possess is secured by a circuit of barbed-wire entanglements into which human perversity travels at its peril. We are still

living in the jungle; the ape and the tiger in us are not dead or even dormant. Our outlook is harshly competitive; and the rule of life is still the struggle for existence, with "the survival of the fittest," where the fittest is all too often the clever scoundrel. This is that "cosmic process" which Huxley told us long ago we should have to reverse if humanity is to make a real advance. But we have not reversed it; we have only limited it. That, it is true, is no small advantage. We have certainly improved the jungle in many ways; but an improved jungle is not the City of God. Civilization is still only barbarism with a polished top.

The urbanity of the original town-dweller was doubtless only skin-deep; but it was at least a voluntary thing, and for that reason it might have sunk deeper and become a habit. But when the element of constraint entered in, it turned the natural man into a natural rebel. Consequently new checks and new arrests upon the waywardness of human impulse had to be devised; and though this has been going on a long time, a complete set has not yet been formulated. The infinite variety and the utter incalculability of human wilfulness can never indeed be wholly provided for, however finely we weave and however widely we spread the network of law and order. But we do our best to overtake the elusive task—with a fine hopefulness, still electing parliaments and legislatures to carry on this unending labour of Sisyphus. And it has now come to this—that civilization is a vast organization of checks arrests and balances of self-interest, deriving its sanctions chiefly from fear. Our common life

is a scramble within the conditions imposed by the huge accumulation of law and rule which we have inherited from our fathers and to which each new generation adds its contribution. The presupposition of the first town dweller was that he might pursue his own ends so long as he did not hurt his neighbours. No doubt he did again and again hurt his neighbours, but it was then an affair of personal relationships, and it is not inconceivable that he might at least have discovered that his neighbour was, like himself, a good fellow. But the normal postulate of the civilized man is that he is free to pursue his own interests so long as he does not run his head into the frontier posts of legal prohibition. The early town dweller obeyed a rudimentary conscience; his modern descendant is restrained by a compulsory code. The sanction has shifted from within to without. The ordinary man starts out with the assumption that he has a right, perhaps even a duty, to grind his own axe and to seek his own ends, so long as he keeps within the circle of legal definitions, and that he may still claim to rank as a good citizen. Let it be gladly conceded that a strain of the original *civis* still survives in most men; and there are few men indeed who have not a circle of friends and associates within which their social conduct is voluntary and spontaneous. But beyond their inner circle lies the human jungle where the self-regarding instincts are still active, curbed only by the menace of pain and penalty from illicit predatory adventure. This is no basis for a sound and fruitful social order.

And as it is within, so it is between communities.

Europe was held together before the war by a principle called the Balance of Power, the opposition to each other of two rival groups of self-interest of approximately equal strength. Nations are governed, like individuals, by self-interest; international life is made up of the incessant interaction of competing interests. Sometimes nations agree to make certain mutual concessions, to regard certain modes of conduct as inadmissible between them, to accept certain common checks and restraints upon themselves in order to mitigate the severity and the costly waste of the conflict of interests. The growth of International Law is intrinsically no more a proof of moral progress than it is a demonstration of the binomial theorem; for even in the jungle also, self-preservation is as much a matter of mutual concession as of superior strength. The one point at which some real advance in humanity might have been claimed before the war, the Geneva Convention, has been swamped by the new and unthinkable horrors and brutalities of modern warfare. The European state system rested upon a delicate balance between the disruptive force of self-interest and the cohesive energy of International Law; and how precarious the position was and how little it took to bring it down in a howling ruin, the origins of the present war sufficiently show. This is still the jungle, the jungle on a large scale; a jungle, it is true, with the rudiments of public law; and a jungle with public law is a better place to live in than a jungle without it. But it is at the mercy of the ape and tiger all the time. When they run amuck, public law goes for nothing. This

is the inwardness of the happenings in Europe to-day. Along with the human scrap-heap the most notable achievement of civilization is the human shambles.

It would be idle to deny that civilization has wrought great and untold good to men. But it has done so in so far as it has retained its character as a free growth out of our native need for fellowship. Wherever and whensoever it has preserved or reasserted its freedom in the teeth of the increasing complexity of coercive sanctions it has been an inexhaustible treasure-house. The great mediæval churches of England were the products of a free and vivid corporate life, as yet not strangled by the heavy grip of centralized authority and formal regulation. It is significant that the great classics of literature have been either the achievements of periods of comparatively free and unhindered fellowship or the work of rebels like Dante, Bunyan, Pascal, Blake, Krasinski, Shelley, and others who defied the external bonds and sanctions by which the society of their time was held together. To-day genius is only able to express itself in the teeth of civilization; and next to the slum and the shambles, its most damning feature is the hopeless mediocrity of its artistic and creative achievement.

IV.—WHAT WILL THE NEW ORDER BE?

It is true that the wild beast has been penned in a cage of his own making. His machinery of law and order is the invention of his better or at

least of his saner self. But he has more and more relegated the running of this machinery to a something outside himself which he calls the "state," which is essentially only an apotheosis of the policeman. But the "state" in practice has come to be to all intents and purposes a small junta of privileged persons; and democracy has become in fact government by a well-to-do oligarchy. Of recent years the "state" has heard the voice of organized labour and social insurgency to some purpose; but saving only for the purpose of preserving national unity in face of the disintegrating influences of war-time, labour has not yet been allowed to sit in the seats of the mighty. It has hitherto been confined to the rather negative task of protest and criticism; it has now made up its mind to essay the positive task of government.

But when it takes the task in hand, how will it go about it? Is it going to work on the basis of the existing framework and only give us a new jungle for the old? Will it be merely that the top-dog and the under-dog exchange places? We see what the ethical and psychological foundations of the present confusion are; and while they persist they will work the same confusion at last even in spite of the completest economic transformation. Is there any guarantee that an extension of formal and external restraints upon predatory self-regard by drastic dealings with property and its alleged rights will produce a society materially better or happier? Frankly, are the moral and psychological conditions of a co-operative commonwealth in sight? It is good that Labour should have achieved its present growing

unity ; but it must be remembered that it is a unity resting upon the need of a common front over against a powerful enemy. When Labour is triumphant, is there any ground of expectation that it will not in the hour of triumph fall apart like the Balkan States after their war on Turkey, or like the factions which were united to bring about the Russian Revolution, but fell to quarrelling when they began the business of reconstruction? Has the new spirit the moral reserves with which to face the difficulties and to weather the vicissitudes of the future? Or to put it still more fundamentally, can it (in Lamennais's fine phrase) "create peoples"; or is it only proposing to put new clothes on the old rotten body? Will it give us a new kind of civilization or is it going to be content with such changes as may be wrought within the old framework?

CHAPTER III

THE COEFFICIENT OF FREEDOM

I.—THE INWARDNESS OF LIBERTY

EDMUND BURKE once said that liberty is what a people thinks it is. There are certain conditions which individuals and groups regard as essential to the fulfilment of life, and when they have these conditions, they consider themselves free. Insomuch as they accept them willingly, clearly no man can dispute their freedom. That some one also denies that they are free does not alter the fact that they are not aware of not being free. Which means that liberty is an affair of the mind, an inward, not an outward thing. Which in its turn means that one's views of what constitutes liberty depends at last upon what one conceives the ends of life to be.

Britons have sung lustily for generations that they never, never will be slaves. But when they first sang that song, the one thing they resented and feared was foreign domination; and so they fall to singing it with the same heartiness still if some international trouble begins to brew. Whenever it has appeared that the one thing that really matters is to be and to remain a Briton, then liberty clearly means keeping out the foreigner, even though one is all the time in a quite real bondage to the capitalist. If it be true that the chief end of a Briton is to be a Briton, then the one problem of liberty is to foil the Kaiser, even though in the process every other domestic liberty is thrown to the winds. But

while the Briton in his insular way has been apt to think of the end of life as consisting chiefly in "being British," the German has quite definitely believed that his appointed end consisted in turning every other man into a German. That is why he has talked so much about his Kultur, so much indeed that the whole world is sick of the word and the thing. His real "place in the sun" was to spread—anyhow—the glorious German way; and whatever personal self-limitation the great errand required, he willingly accepted. He had all the elbow-room he wanted for his job; and it never entered into his head that he was not a free man.

It is the amazing miracle of modern history that a whole nation should have been subdued to the docility which has characterized the German people of this generation. But it shows how much can be done—at least for a time—with human nature, by proper drilling. The growth of the German idea of a Kultur-mission need not detain us here. Its natural history is that of any megalomania. But whatever its origin, it has been the staple of German education for more than a generation. This people has persuaded itself that it is an elect race specially chartered to tidy up and to finish this untidy and unfinished world. This stimulating thought of a world-wide national destiny was drilled into children at school and into students at college. Teachers and professors suspected of scepticism were removed. Under this constant stimulus, the German people have learnt to submit to an organization of themselves probably without even a distant historical parallel. This has of course its admirable side.

Every nation is assuredly a chosen people—for some good end ; and Germany had a good deal to teach the world that the world needed to learn, such as thoroughness, an infinite capacity for taking pains, patience, willingness of subordination to the common good. But the Germans made two bad mistakes. They thought that they were the only people who had anything of worth to give the world ; and they could not think of any other way of giving it to the world than by ramming it down the world's throat. And the end of this was a social order conceived as organization for power. Treitschke talked of " a nation which was an army."

The proper criticism of this kind of thing is that while it may make good Germans, it makes poor men. And it is the growth of some vague and ill-defined idea in the Anglo-Celtic peoples, that, important as it might be to be good Britons or good Americans, it was somehow more important to be real men, that has made Great Britain and America a soil so uncongenial to anything comparable to German *Kultur*. It is true in a broad sense that the Teutonic people have secured order at the expense of what the Anglo-Celtic and Latin peoples call liberty ; and conversely. And the result of this difference may be found in the contrast between the trimness, the general tidiness, the uniformity of modern German life, and the untidiness, the overlapping and the waste in social England and America. But the German advantage here has been gained at too great, too tragical a cost. Manhood has been sacrificed to Germanhood, a very much smaller thing. The German organization may have sup-

pressed individualism ; but it has also gone far to destroy individuality ; and if you want to keep individuality alive, you must be ready to risk a certain anarchy of individualism. An open space even though it be somewhat untidy is a better and a healthier place for men than a general trimness in which it is impossible to turn round without smashing the china. The passion for liberty is a sort of space-hunger ; and its worst enemy is regimentation. On sufficient cause, a people will submit to regimentation without being sensible of a real loss of liberty ; yet they cannot be regimented without a real and tragical loss of manhood.

For there is after all something in a man which gives him an end *in himself* which is anterior and not subordinate to his Germanism, his Britannicism, or his Americanism. It is that thing that we sometimes call the soul, but which, by whatever name we call it, is the distinction which makes him a man. It is his selfhood ; and whatever place a man may have to fill in the corporate movement of history, whether of his nation or of the race, he cannot on that account be deprived of his native and prescriptive right to a full realization of his own personality. This is why men are not for ever amenable to regimentation. The soul cannot remain static ; it is a living and therefore a growing thing. There is in it a certain urge which chafes against conditions that are felt to be cramping, and which in the end either drives it to escape from those conditions or to blow them up. This expresses itself in a demand for elbow-room, for space, for the opportunity of self-realization. The cramping conditions may be

of various kinds. They may be physical ; and this elemental space-hunger will drive men afield seeking the open, as it drove the Iberian and the Celt on the great westward track before the dawn of history. The conditions may affect the religious life ; and the urge of life will drive men forth to seek a spiritual emancipation, as it sent the Pilgrims to the unknown shores of New England. The cramping circumstances may be of the political kind, in which case they may be smashed up as in the French Revolution. The Russian Revolution is essentially an attempt to abolish economic conditions that bind men's souls. All this is the native and intrinsic energy of life, the *élan vitale*, as Bergson calls it, the urge of life in its everlasting fight against the crippling and impoverishing limitations of matter and of a materialistic world-order.

II.—AUTHORITY THE DENIAL OF LIBERTY

This then is the central problem of social order—how to respect man's clear right to achieve individuality without leaving the door open to the disruptive waywardness of mere individualism ; and it is a problem which still awaits solution. Historically, order has been chiefly secured by a process which destroys both individualism and individuality at the same time, the attempt to coerce men by external pressure into some kind of solidarity. That has been the traditional policy of the governmental type of mind, whether one finds it in the autocrat or the bureaucrat, in the state or in the

church. Their ideal is that of a regimentated society based upon the conscription of wills ; their only formula for a social basis is uniform submission to authority. They aim at unity by establishing uniformity, on the assumption that the infinite variety of human nature can be drilled to a common submission and reduced to a single type by heavy pressure from the outside. But human nature can stand just so much of this kind of treatment ; and when the process goes beyond a certain point, it provokes insurgency and invites its own destruction. Life is stronger than any chains of man's forging, and no form of coercion has yet been devised which can bind the soul for ever. The great failure of history is authoritarianism.

Liberty, however is not a principle which can stand alone. It is exposed to two dangers—abuse and neglect. The people who lose their liberty are those who use it wrongly and those who do not use it at all. From these dangers it can only be saved by a co-ordinate principle which will continually vitalize it and balance it. That companion principle, what is it ?

The orthodox answer is, of course, Authority ; and so long as we keep to abstractions the answer is sound. But the word Authority is by now definitely polarized. It is used exclusively—in this connection—to describe an authority which is external, and therefore uniform, more or less mechanical and centralized. But this kind of authority is the negation and not the coefficient of liberty. It has already been pointed out that historically the will to freedom has had to assert

itself continually against constituted authority. And if it be said that this has been provoked by the aggression of an overgrown authority, an authority become tyrannous, the answer is that authority tends from its very nature to gravitate into tyranny. Authority demands for its own self-realization unity and centralization ; and where authority is external, the only chance for liberty lies in dividing the authority against itself and in keeping it divided.

But there is another deeper and more subtle reason why authority is the enemy of liberty, even authority which is not grown tyrannous. It undoubtedly leads to the atrophy of that human instinct which is the real coefficient of freedom. Psychologists have observed the fact that in the course of nature the acquisitiveness of the child is by and by checked and corrected by a nascent sense of justice ; its infantile individualism is balanced by a crude but promising social sense. But when the child grows up, it finds itself in a world of law where a scheme of prohibitions and requirements appears to define the areas of social obligation. Its inherited social conscience is largely superseded by a conventional practice sanctioned and enforced by an external authority. Law-abidingness becomes the norm and the limit of social obligation ; and whatsoever lies beyond (save in the intimate relation of friendship and kinship) is a work of supererogation. The arrested development of the social conscience of mankind is largely chargeable to the authoritarian heresy. For it has substituted legal definitions for the instances of the social conscience and has so far stifled its growth. For its virtual

effect is this: that having described the circle of legal liability, it is taken as saying, "You may be as much of a wild beast as you can and want to be, so long as you keep within this hedge." The actual result is that the circle has to be continually revised; the ramification of the law becomes ever finer and more extensive, yet never fine or extensive enough to cover the craft and the daring of a liberty demoralized and perverted by the atrophy of its natural coefficient. Hence always, *in corruptissima civitate, plurimæ leges*.

It is true that law is in the first instance a product of the social conscience. But because it is an attempt to define social obligation, it comes in time to be regarded as stating the sum of social obligation. Naturally, therefore, it tends to check the free operation and the expansion of the social conscience; and at last even puts an embargo upon original goodness. That is why the moral pioneer and the prophet have usually been treated as criminals. In the eyes of authority, to transcend the law is as grave an offence as to transgress it. This is the position to which Jesus addresses himself in the Sermon on the Mount. "Except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven." The conventional moral practice was good enough so far as it went; but it was an affair of definitions and injunctions. It repressed and confined the free working of that moral consciousness of which it was at best only a provisional and elementary expression. Sweep away these limits, said Jesus. The moral sentiment which forbids murder ought

not to be stopped at that point. Its vital logic should go on to arrest the anger which leads to murder, and to prevent the offence which provokes the anger. But in point of fact it does not do so. The law which was intended to restrain the evil doer ends in paralysing the chief natural safeguard against evil doing. The spirit of the law within is put out of effective action by the letter of the law without. The office of the social conscience becomes a sinecure. Its capacity for expansion and growth is destroyed; and it is content to operate in a mechanical, stereotyped fashion within the prescribed limits. Its reactions to moral evil are conventional and formal; and its moral ideal is reduced to a standardized goodness without independence or originality.

This is not to say that there are not certain conditions in which discipline and tutelage are essential; and it is possible that the recoil from authority in certain modern educational theories is injuriously exaggerated. But it will inflict no injury commensurate to that which has come from the process by which authority has deprived the common man of the responsibility of independent moral judgment and the capacity of original and spontaneous moral action. One of the urgent needs of our time is a large restriction of the area of authority, if only to throw normal human nature back upon its own resources and to liberate the suspended and inert faculty of moral criticism and adventure. This is indeed by no means all that is needed; but that this is a real need is not open to question. Further multiplication of the machinery of social control

would be disastrous—even though it be devised in the interests of social emancipation. I have had occasion to observe some of the effects of the reformatory school system on children. When boys and girls who have been subjected to the rigorous discipline of these institutions have been subsequently placed in conditions of comparative freedom, they appear at first inert and lethargic. But when they realize the absence of the old restrictions, their energy begins to discharge itself, and continues to do so with increasing violence and swiftness, until it sometimes carries them to excesses of misbehaviour greater than those of their original waywardness. But when this period of reaction has worked itself out, there is almost invariably an awakening of the sense of obligation to others—very dim and flickering, it is true, and frequently manifesting itself in ways incredibly grotesque—but nevertheless a very real thing which only needs a real opportunity in order to become a very powerful force of regeneration. And this has led, again and again, in communities where the juvenile delinquent is treated on these lines, to a spontaneous attempt to establish some sort of domestic social order. The appointed coefficient of freedom is already within us. It only awaits release. This release requires something more than a contraction of the sphere of authority, but at the same time it does require that.

III.—THE WILL TO FELLOWSHIP

Alongside of the will to self-fulfilment, which is the mainspring of the demand for liberty, is the

instinct for fellowship. Just as men were made to be free, so they were made to be social. Mr. Chesterton says in one of his books that Hanwell is full of people who believe in themselves, by which he means that isolation brings insanity. Whether it be the isolation of self-contempt or of self-conceit, the end is always the same—idiocy. Kipling has somewhere a terrible story of two men on a lonely lightship of whom one dies; and the rest of the story describes the mental breakdown of the survivor. Society is necessary for sanity, and no less for sanctity. Even holiness is a social product. The hermit and the anchoress who sought solitude in order to escape defilement went to the wrong place to achieve saintliness. Jesus came not merely to save men, but to create a society. For souls are only fully saved when they are being saved together. We cannot do without one another, for we are members one of another. If personality must have space, it must no less have society. "Religion," said George Meredith, "was born in fellowship." The discovery of God was made by a company; and you will find that all the most abiding human achievements are social acts or products. Schools of the prophets in Israel, schools of philosophers in Greece, schools of mystics in the Middle Ages, schools of artists in the Renaissance—these are the central fires out of which are shot forth living things, things of everlasting life—the Hebrew prophecies, Plato's *Republic*, the *Imitation of Christ*, the sculptures of Michelangelo, the pictures of Titian, and much more. And when Lamennais said that the proper corollary of the achievement of liberty was the creation of peoples,

he meant this one thing—that liberty could only be saved by being socialized, just as society could not be regenerated without being liberated. Here is the natural coefficient of freedom—fellowship.

But it is not enough to say the word. As one does not drift into freedom, so no one lapses into fellowship. Like freedom, fellowship comes to nothing unless it be a passion. There is a shallow *camaraderie* which costs nothing, gives nothing, and demands nothing but the small change of a convivial hour. But all vital fellowship requires an active and patient will to fellowship ; it only lives as an eager co-operation. We can only create it as we make a business of it. The materials and energies of fellowship are stored up in us ; but they have to be set moving with seriousness and system before we get the thing itself.

At last, morality is essentially the art of fellowship, and ethics the science of social relationships. In practice, the distinction between individual and social ethics is quite unreal ; for no man can live unto himself alone. St. Paul's case for truthfulness is the case for every moral act and attitude—"we are members of one another." When Professor Rauschenbush defines love as "no flickering or wayward emotion, but the energy of a steadfast will bent on creating fellowship," he is declaring the law and the gospel. There is little more urgent in the interests of sound thinking and clear speech than some rehabilitation of this word *love*, its rescue from the slough of saccharine sentimentalism and its recognition as the generic name of those human impulses which constitute the many-coloured energy

of social cohesion. We sometimes speak of justice and love as though they were in some sort antithetical, or at least the expressions of different and separate moral principles. What we ordinarily call justice is at best nothing more than the rough and crude readjustment of conflicting claims or the redress of an injury, usually effected by some kind of compulsion. It does not establish a right relation between the opposing parties; it fails to touch the moral problem which is involved in all injustice. If real justice is respect and care for my neighbour's rights, then it must spring from within, and can never be imposed from without. At the best, justice as it is commonly conceived is but a method of outward equilibration—as things are, a necessary expedient to prevent social anarchy. That its origins are to be found in the social conscience is beyond doubt, but its actual practice represents no positive principle of social integration. It does no more than tighten the joints of the cage in which the ape and tiger are penned. A radical justice—which consists of a thoroughgoing respect for my neighbour's rights—depends upon an attitude to my neighbour which comes under the category of Love. And from this source come all the varied impulses of social integration—restitution and forgiveness, forbearance and toleration, sympathy and mutual help, and the rest. These, and such as these, are the moral foundations of the co-operative commonwealth, the ingredients of living fellowship.

IV.—DEMOCRACY, ITS FAILURE AND THE REMEDY

In all the current speculations about reconstruction, a great deal of attention is paid to forms of government. There are those who hope for salvation from the overthrow of monarchies; and we have been told again and again that the world can never find rest until Germany is democratized. This war is being fought "to make the world safe for democracy." But it is not at all certain that either democracy or a republican form of government guarantee the necessary conditions either of freedom or of fellowship. That Jack's vote is as good as his master's does not of itself secure the right kind of relation between Jack and his master. Political equality does not do away with the possibility either of the worst kind of exploitation, or of cruel oppression. Lincoln's famous formula, "Government of the people by the people for the people," has in practice too often been converted—even in the very name of democracy—into government of the people by a *bourgeois* oligarchy in the interests of the privileged classes. And it does not in the least follow that government by majorities safeguards those essential spiritual principles by which men live. When so much eloquence is being poured forth in praise of democracy, it might not be amiss to recall Lord Acton's warning: "Democracy no less than monarchy or aristocracy sacrifices everything to maintain itself, and strives with an energy and a plausibility that kings and nobles cannot attain, to override representation, to annul all the forces of resistance and

deviation, and to secure, by plebiscite, referendum or caucus, free play for the will of the majority. The true democratic principle, that none shall have power over the people, is taken to mean that none shall be able to restrain or to evade its power; the true democratic principle that the people shall not be made to do what it does not like is taken to mean that it shall not be required to tolerate what it does not like. The true democratic principle that every man's free will shall be as unfettered as possible is taken to mean that the free will of the people shall be fettered in nothing. Religious toleration, judicial independence, dread of centralization, jealousy of state interference, become obstacles to freedom instead of safeguards when the centralized force of the state is to be wielded by the hands of the people. Democracy claims to be not only supreme, without authority above, but absolute, without independence below; to be its own master and not a trustee. The old sovereigns of the world are exchanged for a new one, who may be flattered and deceived, but whom it is impossible to resist or to corrupt, and to whom must be rendered the things that are Cæsar's and also the things that are God's. Ideally, it is true, democracy is the only possible way of life for awakened men; but in practice, as we have known it, it has only served to keep the ring clear for the strong man. Political equality has been stultified by its permission of a freedom which has led to the extremest form of economic inequality. It has made possible a new type of privilege—the privilege based on property, and a new kind of exploitation—the exploitation of men

by money. This does not necessarily mean that democracy has proved a failure; but only that it has been incomplete. But we have no guarantee that economic equality will make it any the more complete. Social democracy may quite easily in time create a new type of privilege. It may be maintained with a good deal of assurance that the extremes of luxury and misery have been much greater during the age of democracy than in any previous period. Certainly the rich have never been richer or the poor poorer than in our day. Yet of itself the limitation or the abolition of the opportunity of economic exploitation does not contain any guarantee that the millennium will immediately follow. The devil that is cast out may quite easily—as he has often done—return to the empty and garnished house with seven devils worse than himself. Political democracy is a necessary but inadequate organ of life; add to it the policy of economic equality, and it will still be inadequate. The only thing that can make democracy safe for men is a thoroughgoing moralization. And those who imagine that the abolition of the property privilege will liberate moral forces adequate to the sound reconstruction of society are living in just the same kind of fool's paradise as those simple people who think that the defeat of the Central Powers will immediately release a stream of moral power sufficient of itself to create a new world. If democracy is to be moralized, it must be moralized from within. Its principle of equality must be supplemented by its own natural co-ordinate—the principle of fraternity.

And there is in the time before us a quite real danger that the new resurgent elements in society may fall in love with government as deeply as any previous ascendant class has done. It is not inconceivable that we may see the state growing into a Leviathan more monstrous than Hobbes's; and instead of aristocracy and a *bourgeois* plutocracy we may find ourselves under the heels of a bureaucracy. With whatever sympathy one observes the insurgency of the proletariat, it is useless to hide from oneself the possibilities of self-frustration that are inherent in the movement. It has been observed with justice that nationality is a good thing so long as it is being striven for, but that once obtained it becomes a peril. It may grow into imperialism. And a social democracy, however desirable and necessary it may be, may—with a centralized state—quite conceivably become a first-class tyranny. Between Prussian junkers and proletarian bureaucrats there is not a pin to choose. For the religion of both alike is uniformitarianism; and uniformitarianism is death.

A popular rising is always a moving spectacle; and it has its origins in real causes. But its triumph may become a tragedy; and indeed will always end in tragedy if its insurgency is not charged with moral passion. A revolt against injustice and disability may easily create new injustice and new disability unless the spirit of the revolt is itself the spirit of justice. Resentment may raise a rebellion, but it cannot establish a revolution. It will do no more than change the clothes of the old body. The real menace in the present insurgency has been

and is, its emphasis upon class-interests. This is indeed not unnatural. But so long as the class motive governs the movement, it will hardly accomplish more than the creation of new class-frontiers which may in their turn become as burdensome and reactionary as the old. The new British Labour Party has rightly included in its membership workers by brain as well as by hand; and this growing catholicity is certainly a sign of great hope. Implied in it is the demand that all those who board and lodge on the industry of a country shall take some active share in it, or in the enrichment of the country's life. This is as it should be. The day of the "idle rich" is over. But having achieved this end, a nation which shall be a working people, can we save it from schism and disintegration? From difference of opinion, of course, it cannot be saved; and it would be a bad day for it when it sought such a salvation. But from divisions that became antagonisms, from partisanship that became tyrannies, from competition that becomes exploitation, no society can be saved except it be informed by a genuine moral passion, a deep humanism which has ceased to think in terms of class or party or any other sectional interest. Such a society may seem a chimera at the present time; yet there seems to be no reason why men should not become possessed by the passion for fellowship, as in times past they have been possessed by the passion for freedom. And this is the moral impulse which will make in the coming days the difference between a social revolution which is a dance of death and one that shall be a pageant of life. For the old single slogan

of *Freedom* we must adopt the double slogan of *Freedom and Fellowship*. We have before us larger tasks than the redemption of a class. Our business is to create a living society. And we must set out in the faith that it can be done.

CHAPTER IV

CHANGE OF HEART

I.—REVOLUTION AND RELIGION

"**W**HAT was most peculiar and essential in his creed," says Professor Dowden of Lamennais, "remained the same through every change—the opinion that all real society, all society which contains a principle of stability, must be founded upon a religious faith. To spiritualize the democracy was to the last the object of his most earnest endeavours. . . ." Lamennais's great contemporary Mazzini believed with a like intensity of conviction that the future was bound up with a revival of faith. The former inscribed upon the programme of his famous newspaper *L'Avenir* the motto, "For God and Liberty"; and Mazzini's battle-cry was like unto it, "For God and Humanity."

Lamennais abandoned his Church because he found that it (no less than the monarchies of Europe) was more intent upon the preservation of its prestige and its privileges than upon its mission in the world. It was, he believed, vain to look to it to take any share in "the creation of peoples," in spiritualizing the democracy; and it should be acknowledged with frankness that the lapse of a century has not availed to quicken any livelier promise of a Church eager and competent to establish society upon a spiritual basis. It is useless to evade the palpable fact that the present insurgency of the proletariat acknowledges no debt to or affinity with the insti-

tutional religion of our time. Not that the new movement is not religious ; it is in a very real way a religion to many who have found in it a hope that the Churches have not brought to them and a living faith which is in vivid contrast to the conventional religious gestures of our Christian *bourgeoisie*. The normal attitude of the social insurgent to the Church is indifference, contempt or active antipathy ; and his judgment upon it is that it is an obsolete survival, hardly worth an old-age pension.

But it does not in the least follow—and in point of fact it is exceedingly unlikely—that the religious impulse in the revolutionary movement is anything like sufficient for its aims or powerful to exercise the moral discipline necessary to the accomplishment of the task in hand. Some years ago Dr. Forsyth asked the question—addressing it in the first instance to the advocates of what is called the “ social Gospel ” —“ What is our social ardour to live on after a few disillusionizing generations ? What moral reserves are we storing up for the vicissitudes of the great business of history ? ” Our answer may not agree with Dr. Forsyth’s, but the question is well put and pertinent—more widely pertinent to-day than when he put it. It is our conviction that the new rising life of the people requires for its fulfilment a larger spiritual content and a more severe and steady moral discipline than as yet it appears to contain, and the crisis of the Church is the question whether it is going to measure up to this great and pressing task of spiritualizing and moralizing the nascent social democracy.

It is not without misgiving that one confesses

the almost total absence of any present likelihood that the Church will be found ready against that day. It is idle and cheap work to rail against the Church; but a churchman may be permitted to ask other churchmen to face the facts, however unpleasant they may be. Here a great fuss about the Second Advent; and there much ado about Christian unity; and everywhere the Church a sort of general utility agency, a maid-of-all-work in the community, doing all sorts of little odd jobs that do not belong to it; meantime its life petering out in bustle and talk. We go to Free Church Council meetings and to "Congresses on Christian Efficiency," and we draw out pretty paper plans of co-operative evangelism and what not; and all the time the churches becoming emptier, and the Bride of Christ despised and rejected of men. There is no sadder chapter in the Church's history than its chronic unpreparedness for emergencies. The great crises in human affairs have taken it unawares. When the crisis of July 1914 came upon the world, the Church was stricken dumb before it. Yet had it been about its business, it might even at the eleventh hour have stood above the storm, as its Master did one day on Gennesaret, and have said to the winds and waves of human passion, "Peace, be still." But the word was not on its lips. And it has done little since save trim its flagging sails to catch any breeze of militant patriotism that may be abroad—and seemingly without much fruitful result. It talks a great deal about being ready "for the boys when they come back." But will it be ready to answer the questions which some of these "boys,"

when they return, are preparing to ask? And will it be ready in the day when these boys, who have fought the Prussian, begin to settle accounts with the plutocrat; will it be ready to say the redeeming word—not the assuaging word, not the emollient word, but the word that will release the moral passion which must possess the people if the approaching upheaval is to be not a spasm of iconoclastic fury, but a revival of life? It will not be enough to take a belated hand in trying to compose the bitter antagonisms that may develop; nothing is enough save the endeavour to provide a stable moral basis for a new society. That the Church is awake to this urgency there appears little sign. If it is not fiddling while Rome is burning, it is for the simple reason that it does not yet seem to be aware that Rome is on fire.

II.—THE MORAL TRAGEDY OF THE WORLD

In a letter received by the present writer some years ago from Rudolf Eucken, the philosopher said, "If Christianity is to overcome the world, it must on the one hand return to its own living roots, and on the other be applied to the problems of the present time in ever-widening circles." That the catholic implications of Eucken's philosophy did not save him from surrendering to the nationalistic frenzies of war-time is one of the minor tragedies of these troubled years; that however does not affect the general soundness of this saying. "To return to its own living roots," truly; and to recover

the primal word of its commission, this is the immediate wisdom of the Church. And to begin at the beginning means that it realizes afresh that its permanent and radical problem is the moral tragedy of the world.

It would be difficult to discover a better example of the foolish things that wise men can say when they wander from their beats than Sir Oliver Lodge's statement: "The higher man of to-day is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment; his mission, if he is good for anything, is to be up and doing." This was, of course, before the war. In those days the general tendency was to minimize sin and to explain it away, but it is surely no longer possible, in full view of this cataclysm of fire and blood, to dismiss so cavalierly from our reckonings what Lord Morley, with a surer judgment, has described as "that horrid burden and impediment upon the soul which the Churches call sin, and which by whatever name you call it is a real catastrophe in the moral nature of man."

The reduced view of sin which prevailed before the war is to be accounted for partly by our modern obsession with the idea of Progress. This idea in its current form is a direct derivative from the evolution dogma. After the first sharp shock of resentment upon the publication of the Darwinian hypothesis, we incontinently surrendered to it and began to apply it in every direction. In particular we introduced it into the study of history and ethics, and in doing so failed to allow adequately for the fact of human freedom. We surrendered to the conception of human perfectibility without remem-

bering the evidence of human perversity which is to be found both in history and personal experience. We began to conceive of a universe fated to progress. We formed a mental picture of a world which was solemnly and steadily rolling up a gently inclined plane to the city of God. Plainly in this view of the world the New Testament doctrine of sin would fare badly; our moral defeats and failures were obviously only untoward little incidents of the great cosmic ascent. Our moral imperfection and perversity appeared to be no more than an infantile disease which the forces of progress, led by a genial Christian culture would enable us to outgrow. And because the Christian thinker felt the pressure of the new scientific view of the world, the conversion-Gospel of the New Testament became obscured by a culture-Gospel, a gospel eviscerated as tragically as the play of Hamlet with the Prince of Denmark left out, a Gospel devoid of a forthright ethical realism.

There were also other causes contributing to this reduced view of sin—such as the habit of thinking of God in an impersonal way (which was a by-product of the scientific tendency to reduce everything to terms of energy); and a disproportionate conception of the relation of man to the universe (arising out of an exaggerated evaluation of mere size). But the main stream was undoubtedly our indiscriminating capitulation to this view of predestined progress. Yet it may be questioned whether the obsession would have become so deep and so general had we not been living in a period of extraordinary material prosperity. Life was

exceedingly easy and smooth, taking it as a whole, in the last generation. Distant echoes from Putumayo, an occasional strike, a small war—these things and such as these hardly dented the surface of our complacency. The evenness and comfort of the ordinary man's life made him dull and insensitive to the moral tragedy of the world. On the whole, things were going on very well indeed. The old chariot of progress was forging its way bravely up the hill; and presently we should arrive. Just where we were going to arrive did not seem very clear. That however did not matter. Wherever it was, we were getting there.

And now the chariot has been suddenly and awfully pitched over a precipice; and we are writhing at its foot in blood and tears. We had said complacently that the "ape and tiger" were at the point of death; behold, they have turned upon us and are rending us in pieces. The moral tragedy of the world is being enacted in a muddy, bloody horror before our eyes; and our little fantastic dreams of progress are looking very futile and cheap over against this vast catastrophe. This war is the greatest revelation of the moral perversity of man since Calvary. It is idle, if we want to grasp this situation with any degree of ethical realism, to attempt to reach a moral judgment upon it by a measurement of comparative culpabilities. Before God, the world of man is a solidarity and mankind a moral unity; and the theologian has the duty of discovering beneath the concrete happenings of the time that universal disorder of which they are the results and symptoms, and which has en-

gulfed the whole world in this tragedy of blood and tears. The one thing we cannot do after this is to belittle sin or explain it away.

The war is declaring in terms that cannot be mistaken that whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap. It is vindicating what has seemed to many a mere pulpit hyperbole—that there is in the world, for the single soul and for communities, a single moral order which is the ground-plan of the universe, and that transgression of this moral order infallibly leads to retribution, and is the root of the moral tragedy of the world. It is only when we see, as we see to-day, the certainty and the scale of the harvest which transgression of the moral order must soon or late reap, that we realize how stark, how implacable, how uncompromising a thing it is. Historical instances without number might be cited to show how inevitably nations and men who have sown the wind reap the whirlwind. And when one recalls the shameful record of the past generation, that greed which has manifested itself in grasping imperialisms, in backstair diplomacies, in intrigue and chicanery in high places, in the exploitation of the weak by the strong, in the harsh inequalities of the social order, is it to be wondered at that the outraged moral order should have turned upon us and plunged us into this pit of desolation and sorrow? "For the greater part of the seeming prosperity of the world is," said John Ruskin in 1870, "so far as our present knowledge extends, vain; wholly useless for any kind of good but having assigned to it a certain inevitable sequence of destruction and sorrow." And the end of this sequence

is upon us. Just as the small particle of snow upon an Alpine mountain-side moves and gathers volume in its movement until it sweeps upon the valley beneath, a destructive avalanche, so the transgressions and disobediences of men mount and multiply to their certain nemesis of destruction and death. The entail of sin cannot be broken. There is no appeal from this law of moral continuity which inexorably links up the sowing of sin to the harvest of tragedy.

III.—SIN AS EGOISM

Much of the responsibility for the moral self-complacency of Sir Oliver Lodge's "higher man" lies at the door of a type of evangelical tradition whose treatment of sin has covered it with a theological mist of unreality. It would do the Church no harm if those who direct its thinking were to read with care and without prejudice what Mr. Bernard Shaw has to say about *salvationism* in his preface to *Androcles and the Lion*. Soon or late we shall have to acknowledge the general accuracy of his diagnosis of at least one factor in the decadence of Christianity. The common presentation of the "gift of God" in terms of security and safety no doubt touches a responsive chord in our self-regarding instincts; for we have not yet outgrown the animal desire of self-preservation. But to lay the major emphasis upon the idea of "escape" is to pervert the essential point of the Gospel. Christianity is not so untrue to the facts of life as to promise

us an escape from the consequences of our breaches of the moral order. There is no such escape. For sins done in the body or in the mind we have to pay to the uttermost farthing ; and there is no exception to this rule. The egoism which is at the root of the salvationist interpretation of Christianity has been buttressed by a theology largely compounded of eschatological materialism, forensic terminology, and reminiscences of pagan rites. The result is that the plain and immediate significance of this thing that we call *sin* has been distorted, or at least converted into an esoteric generalization which fails to touch the actualities of life with any degree of immediacy or vividness. And now that the fear of hell has largely become obsolete as an ethical motive, the "higher man of to-day" does not worry about his sins.

But if this war does not teach him that sin leads to hell, a very real and inescapable hell, then he is incorrigible ; and we may be perfectly sure that these hells are going to be recurrent until "the higher man" (whoever he may, after all, be) and every other man begins to take his sin seriously. More seriously, indeed, than even as a breach of the moral order with its infallible "recompense of reward." For when we speak of a moral order we are using a thin and diffuse synonym for God. It is high time that we recovered the habit of thinking of ethics not as an affair of abstract ideals but of personal relationships. It is convenient to speak of liberty and honour and the like. But we intend in doing so to hypostatize them and to ascribe to them an independent existence. But these are after

all only names which describe particular kinds of relationship between men ; and they have no existence except as they exist in the mutual attitudes of men. Similarly when we speak of a moral order we are speaking of a pure abstraction unless we conceive of it as the expression and ordering of a personal will. It is not a scheme of enactments which can be codified and reduced to paper ; it is not an objective legislation which operates by its own momentum. It is the living continuous and immediate direction and activity of the ultimate Will of the Universe ; and the breach of the moral order must be interpreted in terms of opposition to that ultimate Will. But Will means personality ; and our disobedience and transgression rank not as offences against a code but as affairs between persons, as the clash of wills, as the interruption of a personal relationship.

This immediately transports the moral problem of the world to another plane. The moral struggle gains a new reality and a new hopefulness when it is seen as the interaction and the co-operation of living wills, and not as the desperate struggle of the soul to conform to an abstract and fixed moral order. The true nature of sin becomes clear. It is misdirection of personality ; it is self-assertion—at last—against God. St. Paul calls it roundly enmity against God. And just because it is this, it is remediable. If we were only the residuary legatees of the anthropoid ape, we should have to wait for the slow processes of evolution to deliver us from this tragic entail. But because there is another Party in the case, the problem is simplified.

The presumption is indeed that—granted the goodwill of the second Party—the problem may be settled out of hand.

But the moral order—what is it? How is it to be summarily defined in terms of actual conduct? Let us say provisionally that the divine order for the world of human life reduced to human practice is mutuality, reciprocity, "love thy neighbour as thyself," and "we are members one of another." And stripped of all theological mystery, sin is simply and only egoism, self-love. The sinner is the man who is for himself alone; and whether it be in the publican or the Pharisee, in the gambler or the grafter, in the sycophant or the tyrant whom he flatters, it is always this same thing. "When," says the *Theologia Germanica*, "the creature claimeth for its own anything good, such as Substance, Knowledge, Life, Power and, in short, whatever we should call good, as if it were that or possessed that . . . as often as this cometh to pass, the creature goeth astray. What did the devil do else or what was his going astray but that he claimed for himself to be also somewhat and would have it that somewhat was his and something was due to him. This setting up of a claim, and his I, and Me, and Mine—these were his going astray and his fall. And so it is to this day." There, as simply as possible, is the central mystery of sin. It is any kind of unsocial or antisocial conduct; but it does not end there. It is not only, let it be repeated, an offence against an abstract morality. That which is anti-social relative to man is antisocial relative to God. To sin is to break with God, to make oneself an

outlaw in God's world. And all the way from the mean tippler who spends on his drouthy throat what should go to his children's empty stomachs, to the despot who fattens on the servitude of the weak, sin is at once a wronging of man and rebellion against God.

This is the central fact upon which our eyes must be firmly fixed if we are to think accurately upon the mission of Christianity. Sin is not a mysterious distemper to be talked about in the large. It is this radical schism between man and man, between man and God. "The wisdom of the ancients," says Lamennais, "gave to Satan the name of Ahriman or ruler of those who have no ruler. It says also: The man who gives utterance to the word *Me* is a devil. The Wisdom of God says, *Vae Soli*, woe to the man who is alone. This saying is pregnant with meaning, and contains in itself the whole mystery of sin. Sin being a principle of egoism and isolation it forces each to lose himself in his own individuality. The insatiable *moi* breathes in all that lies around it; it swells itself, develops, grows steadily and absorbs all that is weaker than it . . . and it can be stopped in its progress only by another tyrant equal to it or superior to it in strength. There is a struggle, bloody, pitiless; and the hideous society which is composed of these things is but the seething mass of hungry combatants who come together only to devour one another. . . . This is the state of which sin has made us citizens . . . we have become slaves of the devil, who flatters our desires for independence while he loads us with chains, and whether they

will or not, subdues to the discipline of his army the deserters from God." The reaction of sin upon mankind is to divide it into two classes: the top-dog and the under-dog, the exploiter and the exploited. The impulse of self-love puts the strong man on the throne and the weak man under his feet. Not that the weaker man has less self-love, but he has less capacity, less power; and in the scramble for the prizes of self-love, he goes under and the strong man rides him. The chronic historical gulf between privilege and disinheritance, the recurrence of war—the whole length and breadth of our human tragedy—is to be traced at last to this radical egoism.

It is difficult to say which condition, that of the top-dog or that of the under-dog, is the more demoralizing. The top-dog becomes hardened and brutalized, the under-dog is crushed and dehumanized. The tyrant grows more tyrannous, the serf more servile. The despot tightens the bands of coercion; and in self-defence the helot counters it with cunning. On the one hand, despotic power, pride, arrogance breed a moral insensibility hardly curable; on the other, oppression and fear lead to deceit and shiftiness and all the meaner tactics of self-preservation. It is a historical commonplace that long-continued oppression breaks the moral backbone of a class or a people; and even the disinherited reproduce among themselves the predatory habits of the privileged, prey upon one another as their masters prey upon them. "One could not be blind or deaf," says Lord Morley in his *Recollections*, "to the obvious fact that the bitterest complaints on the lips of the

Irish tenant were constantly to be found directed not against his landlord, but either against his father for dividing the farm, or his brother for marrying, or his neighbour for bidding against him. The efforts of the League (the *Land League*) have been as much directed against the covetousness of tenants in the face of one another as against the covetousness of landlords and agents." And it is useless to suppose that a proletarian state—from which all sectional privileges may have been banished—can escape this deadly disintegration except it be born of a moral revolution. There have been times when the under-dog, baited beyond further endurance, has turned upon his tormentor; and these are indeed the brightest passages in secular history. But revolution does not mean the removing of the leprosy, but only the redistribution of it. The under-dog may become top-dog; but the old canker has not disappeared. It has only changed its place. We shall never create a living society until we are cleansed of the leprosy of self-love. Life will remain an everlasting squalid scramble.

The whole problem came before Jesus one day in a very simple and vivid form. A man came and asked him to bid his brother divide the inheritance with him. It was the old familiar squabble about a dead man's property. The stronger party had grabbed it; and the weaker was left out in the cold. It was a case of plain and palpable injustice. But Jesus went right past the material injustice to the moral heart of the quarrel. The disinherited brother was morally no better than the other; he was in the grip of the same disease. And much graver than

the injustice he had suffered was the moral twist in his own heart. Jesus's comment on the affair was "Beware of covetousness"; and the word went to the root of that affair and every other affair of the kind—from a family quarrel over an estate to an international dispute about a piece of territory or a commercial advantage.

IV.—MORAL REVOLUTION

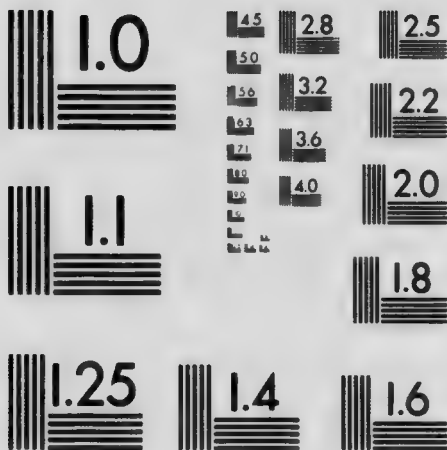
There is a great passage in Newman's *Apologia* where he describes with his own characteristic power the scene of confusion and misery which human history presents, and which he calls "this heart-piercing, reason-bewildering spectacle." For him it meant that either there was no creator or that "this living society of man is in a true sense discarded from His presence." Newman explained it by supposing that the "human race was implicated in some terrible aboriginal catastrophe"; but whether we accept Newman's explanation or another, one cannot look abroad upon the world, especially as we see it to-day, with any degree of moral realism and then share the perky levity of Sir Oliver Lodge's "higher man." The literature of the world and the common life of man are too replete with tragedy and sorrow, with remorse and calamity, springing directly from this thing, to make it possible for sane men to dispose of it by a well-meaning gesture. We are confronted with an organic perversity in human nature; and the problem of creating a society is the problem of "a change of heart."

That this perversity may be plausibly explained as the residuum of our inheritance from the forest and the jungle is obvious ; and if this were all, then we might hopefully assume that man would outgrow his unhappy inheritance. In which case there would be nothing for it but to wait patiently for the millennium. But this view does not square with the facts of the case. The history of man is not that of a steady ascent in moral achievement ; it is an affair of ups and downs, of high aspirations and deplorable apostasies, of splendid leaps forward and of calamitous backslidings. We are compelled, I think, by the facts, to accept some such doctrine of a moral duality as St. Paul describes in the seventh chapter of Romans, and which in one form or another may be found in writings anterior to his. And the question is whether there is not some well-attested way of effecting that organic transformation which we call a change of heart. Clearly we have the materials of a change of heart within us. How then is that readjustment to be carried out which will give to " the law of the mind " an effective ascendancy over " the law in the members," how—to use the great Pauline antithesis—is the spirit to subdue the flesh ? Or, once more, to state it in our own terms, how are our native social instincts to gain the upper hand over our natural anti-social bias ? This inner contradiction -- how is it to be resolved in favour of the moral and spiritual self ?

The primary assumption concerning man with which Jesus set out was his need of a change of heart. He cherished the hope of human perfectibility with-

out forgetting the fact of human perversity; and his first word to man was "Repent." Throughout the New Testament, this process is consistently described in terms of revolution or reversal. The great characteristic words are Conversion, Regeneration, Resurrection (Ephesians ii. 1), Redemption, and Reconciliation. It is a transformation and a new beginning, life for death, liberty for bondage, fellowship for enmity. It is true that the New Testament speaks of it predominantly as being a revolution in respect of the attitude to God; but it no less requires that this change shall effect a co-ordinate revolution in the attitude to man. When Jesus said Repent, He meant *Turn around*; it was a single act with a two-fold reaction. It set man right both with God and man—not so much setting him right with the one by setting him right with the other, as setting him right with both at the one stroke by giving him a change of heart. This need and fact of conversion must be restored to the central place in the immediate and practical aim of the Church if it is to make a real and substantial contribution to the remaking of the world. It is not necessary at this time of day to apologize for a belief in conversion; nor does it invalidate its genuineness as a process that the juvenile science of psychology supposes that it can explain it. The fact remains that, whether by an "eruption from the subconscious" or by "making connection with the higher powers," men are converted; and the condition of conversion is repentance. Only, if repentance and conversion are again to have a real meaning to the world, they must be charged with





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an ethical realism, at once more comprehensive and more radical than that which has commonly characterized the conventional view of them in our generation.

CHAPTER V

THE NEW MAN

I.—THE GOSPEL OF "BENEFITS"

THE Christian is one who is converted and committed to the Kingdom of God, which is at once a social vision and a way of life. He accepts a certain scale of values and a particular view of the ends of life. But the appointed aim of the gospel has been confused and foiled by a persistent acknowledgment in practice of a dual scale of values. This is to be traced, like the salvationist emphasis to which it is related, to the power of our egoism to twist to its own purposes the very Gospel that was given to deliver us from it.

A woman once came to me at a mothers' meeting and expressed a desire to join. I told her she was indeed welcome. Then she asked, "What are the benefits"? I knew she meant blankets, coal tickets, Christmas dinners, and the like; and I told her that there were no benefits. Like the rich young noble she went away sorrowful, even indeed a little indignant that she had had so much trouble for nothing. But that woman was typical of all of us; that is the chronic question—"What are the benefits?" What are we going to get out of it? How shall we make the best of both worlds?

Some for the glories of this world; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come.

But most people want both. Here, we say, is one world, the physical and temporal, with its own

peculiar prizes to offer ; and there is the other, the unseen, with another quite different set of prizes. The problem is how are we to get the utmost out of both, a substantial bank-balance here and a safe reservation hereafter ; how secure treasure both in this world and in the world to come ? But this attempt to reap a double harvest is foredoomed to failure. In the matter of prizes the next world cannot compete on fair terms with this. Its prizes are remoter, more problematical ; they have no market value and are not quoted on the Stock Exchange lists. A piece of real estate yields to most professing Christians, I suspect, more solid comfort than a prospective mansion in the skies. So the real estate interests come first. We want to get on in this world and to get safely into the next. Very well, then ; it's business for the one and religion for the other. But meantime chiefly business. We will squeeze out of this world what we can, as honestly as we can, six days of the week ; and we will stake out a claim in the next by keeping up a nodding acquaintance with religion around the week-end, and by being charitable so far as our means allow.

Now beneath this view there lies a stupendous, though quite obvious error. Though there may be two worlds, *there is only one life*, and that life is continuous and indivisible. Speaking of the German threat of war in July 1914, Mr. Bernard Shaw said to his countrymen that they could not go on for years calling themselves "the boys of the bulldog breed," and then suddenly turn round and say that they were gazelles. Clearly, we cannot

do that kind of thing. We cannot break the inexorable continuity of life; and it is stupid to imagine that men can spend their main energies upon becoming successful business men through life, and then because they have kept on visiting terms with a church be transfigured into first-class saints when they die. Moneybags are not so easily convertible into haloes. The fact is that the scale of values which governs life hereafter must govern life here; and the scale of values which we have accepted in this world will follow us into the next. He is that is filthy shall be filthy still, and he that is greedy shall be greedy still. Only with this difference—that desire remains without the means of satisfaction. That is what Jesus means when He speaks of “where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched.” And it is childish to suppose that an eleventh-hour repentance will restore the years that the locust of self-seeking and the canker of greed have eaten. There is but one life, one scale of values, here and hereafter; for there is but one moral order, if so be that there is but one God.

II.—CREATING MORAL PERSONALITY

Conversion is not a magical process by which one qualifies for certain deferred benefits. It is the creation of a moral personality which is forthwith governed by the values of the Kingdom of God. It is—as has already been said—a setting right with God; and this is something more than an empty commonplace. In some evangelical quarters there is a very strong

emphasis upon an experience which is called *Assurance*; and while it is commonly spoken of as a present certainty of ultimate escape, it does, properly understood, possess a much deeper and worthier content. There is in it a certain sense of being settled upon bedrock, of having touched some final reality. It is as though life had been redeemed from vagrancy and established on a base. Professor Josiah Royce quotes in *The Sources of Religious Insight*, the story of a business man caught in some delinquency and put in prison. There he faces the problems of life; and when a young man comes to him to submit the question of marrying his daughter, he says: "They haven't the point of view. It is life that is the great adventure. Not love, not marriage, not business. They are just chapters in the book. The main thing is to take the road fearlessly—to have courage to live one's life."

"Courage?"

Lannithorne nodded.

"That is the great word. Don't you see what ails your father's point of view and my wife's? One wants absolute security in one way for Ruth; the other wants absolute security in another way for you. And security—it is just the one thing a human being can't have; the thing that's damnation to him if he gets it! The reason it is so hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven is that he has that false sense of security. To demand it just disintegrates a man. I don't know why. It does."

Oliver shook his head uncertainly.

"I don't quite follow you, sir. Oughtn't one to try to be safe?"

"One ought to try, yes. That is common prudence. But the point is that, whatever you do or get you aren't after all secure. There is no such condition; and the harder you demand it the more risk you run. So it is up to a man to take all reasonable precautions about his money or his happiness or his life, and trust the rest. What every man is looking for is the sense of having the mastery over life. But I will tell you, boy, there is only one thing that really gives it."

"And that is . . . ?"

Lannithorne hesitated perceptibly. For the thing he was about to tell this undisciplined lad was his most precious possession; it was the prize of wisdom for which he had paid with the years of his life. No man parts lightly with such knowledge.

"It comes," he said with an effort, "with the knowledge of our power to endure. That's it. *You are safe only when you can stand everything that can happen to you. . . .*"

And this is the point to which conversion should bring a man, else he is not (to borrow a Salvation Army phrase) soundly converted. It is to have achieved the sense of a standing from which nothing can dislodge us, to be able to face the world without fear, and to fare forth gaily into the dark of the future. One who had endeavoured with some faithfulness to serve his fellows was asked by a well-meaning stranger whether he was saved. And the answer gravely given was: "I do not care; I am not concerned about it." To have lost concern about

it—that is salvation. It is the consciousness of having found and purchased the pearl of great price, of possessing a Kingdom that cannot be moved, which enables us to meet all the vicissitudes of life and death, “gentlemen unafraid.” With this goes a certain sense of deliverance from the tyranny of things. At least it enables us to see things in a true perspective. We are still apt to suppose (Jesus notwithstanding) that the fulness of life is contingent upon the multitude of things that we possess ; and mere possession becomes an aim. But real freedom is to have gained independence of things and a contempt for the accumulation of them ; to sit lightly upon our possessions and to make them servants, not our lords. Saul of Tarsus, who seems to have lacked none of the secular “prizes,” who indeed both by inheritance and achievement had the whole world—certainly the only world he cared about—at his feet, came to a time when he summed up all his wealth of ancestry, attainment, and promise in one word of supreme contempt. He called it *dung*. He had undergone what Nietzsche would have called “a transvaluation of values.” In Samuel Butler’s *Erewhon*, the sick man was sent to prison and the man who told a lie to hospital ; and for Paul, conversion was like walking straight into a world where all his conventional judgments were turned upside down as sharply and as abruptly as though he had walked into *Erewhon*. The change wrought in him a condition which he described in this way : “I have learnt in whatsoever state I am therein to be content.” Though he had forfeited the things he once sought and prized, yet he had all

that he needed. That is real wealth, to have all one wants and to want no more than one needs. And the secret of this condition is that sense of inward sufficiency which conversion brings with it, that consciousness of possessing inalienably the pearl of great price. Having that, a man wants little more—food and drink, work to do, a few good books, friendship, the love of a good woman, the laughter of little children round about him—a few elementary things of this kind; and perhaps not even all of these.

This is not that doctrine of "being content in that station of life in which it has pleased Providence to place us," which the rich are so anxious to have preached to the poor. It is a lesson that the poor have learnt; they know how few are the things that are necessary to happiness. If to-day they are rising to demand a larger share of the material things that they produce, it is because the rich have not been content in the station of life to which Providence called *them*. They have ground the faces of the poor in order to elevate their own station; and because they have too much, the poor have too little. This gospel is essentially one to be preached to the rich; for back of our social confusion is the bondage of the rich to their riches.

This sense of sufficiency and liberty is not gained in a day. The entail of life is not so easily broken; and we have to reach this Kingdom through much tribulation. There is no such thing as "sudden conversion." The process may begin in an unexpected moment; but we have to work our passage into peace and freedom. Little by little we shall

disentangle ourselves from the meshes of the past, and with patience win out at last. Conversion is an act of emancipation ; it sets us free for the great adventure of life. It clears our feet of the impedimenta of a materialized culture ; and it purges us of fear. It brings us the knowledge that we can stand all that can happen to us, the calm assurance that beneath the fell blow of circumstance, though our heads be bloody, they shall be unbowed. It sets us on the way to the mastery of life, of the world and all that is in it.

III.—CONVERSION AS EMANCIPATION

This is not the way conversion is conceived where it is most commonly spoken of. The assumption behind the conventional view of conversion is that the world is divided broadly into two classes : the disreputable—consisting of drunkards and harlots, gamblers and thieves ; and the respectable—the decent, well-dressed, law-abiding folk who go to church on Sundays. Conversion is the process which turns the former into the latter. It is not usually recalled that conversion has not infrequently turned respectable men into wild and lawless persons, and has made them (judged by the current orthodoxies) into impossible cranks and dangerous firebrands. The saint has often been regarded as a type of criminal.

This truncated view of conversion springs from a subtle and unrecognized legalism. The preacher may tell us that we are not " under the law " ; and

if it were the law of Moses alone that was in question the preacher would be doubtless right. But our freedom from the law of Moses has passed into a bondage to the law of convention. We have identified righteousness with *sittlichkeit*. For the written law we have substituted the unwritten law of "consuetudinary practice." For most people, Christian conduct is defined by conformity to the customary rule of give-and-take in social conduct. The new law may be less specific in detail; yet it is none the less acknowledged as a definition of moral obligation. But freedom from the law does not mean freedom from its demands but from its limitations. We are not exempted from its spirit but from its letter. We are free not to ignore it but to transcend it. "I came not to destroy but to fulfil." There is no limit to moral obligation; no standard set at which a man having reached he is able to say, "I have attained." There is a creative quality, a restless originality, in the increased moral impulse which drives it to outdo its own best, to stretch out beyond its own highest achievements. It is not satisfied with loving neighbour; it passes on to the love of enemies. Christian morality has a starting-point but no terminus. It is a direction, but no goal in sight. Conversion is understood unless it is regarded as a release of the moral impulse, which may utterly reverse the former manner of life, but which will always be content to "exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees," and ever be true to itself through everything. Whether our legalism gathered around a written code or unwritten convention, it obscures

and indeed denies the true nature of the Christian morality.

This is too common and persistent a heresy to be traced to a particular contemporary source, but it has probably gained some countenance in our time from the ethics of evolutionism. The doctrine of gradual development implies that moral obligations are to be determined by the general moral capacity of a people at that particular stage of the upward ascent at which they may at a particular moment have arrived. Within certain broad limits this view is doubtless sound; and if human freedom were not a fact, it would be the whole truth of the matter. But we know that men are capable both of rising above and of falling below the general moral average of their age; and the moral obligation of an individual is not to be measured by the capacity of his neighbour, but by his own vision of moral good. And by what test is the moral capacity of a people at any point to be determined? Is it to be the customary planes of social correctness, or the requirements of the state? Or what? "The only possible test of reasonableness" (in the determination of conduct), said a British Member of Parliament the other day, "is what is accepted by the consensus of opinion or conviction among contemporary men of the same stage of civilization." In which case what becomes of the prophet, of that remarkable succession of rebels and outlaws who were without honour in their own age, but whom popular romance has so consistently canonized, with the consent of the moral judgment of their posterity? And what becomes of Jesus? The

logic of this view is that no man must be better than his neighbour; normality becomes the law and the prophets; conventionality the hall-mark of holiness. But if the Kingdom of God be anything at all, it is a realm of moral originality, a society of moral pioneers.

IV.—CONVERSION AS VISION

It is not enough to describe conversion in terms of ethical contrasts. The moral consequences of conversion are determined by the new principle of value-judgment which it introduces. Conversion is emancipation because it is also revelation. "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." But when he is born from above, the Kingdom of God is the first thing he sees. This perception has been defined in other ways; to Paul it was "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord"; William Blake called it Jerusalem. But by whatever name you call it, it is essentially the same experience. Its common name is *vision*.

Henri Poincaré, in his book *Science and Method*, tells us that his great mathematical discoveries were made, not as the direct result of conscious processes, but in quick flashes of insight. They seemed to rise unbidden and unexpected to the surface of his mind, on occasions remote from his mathematical interests and under circumstances wholly irrelevant to them. That this is capable of simple psychological explanation may be true; but it suggests very clearly that we are capable

of sound processes of perception outside of, if not unconnected with, the machinery of ratiocination. It is not to belittle the office of reason to deny that it is our only organ for the ascertainment of truth; and it is surely a very foolhardy dogmatism, in the present rudimentary state of our knowledge of the processes of the mind, that denies our capacity of receiving news from regions far beyond those which sense and reason are able to explore. And it is specially presumptuous to do so in the face of that succession of prophets and poets and seers who claim to have spoken with God, and prove it by the way in which they speak to men. We may be sceptical of Blake's visions, though he was surer of their truth than of the reality of the sense-world. But we cannot reasonably be sceptical of the existence of casements in men's souls that look out upon the eternal. Yet it is true of us that we have been over-persuaded that the only light we can afford to trust is the light of natural faculty; and while we pay lip-service to the idea of revelation in the past, we have rationalized out of our scheme of things the reality of vision in the present. To be converted should mean that we are sensitive at once to the movement of life in all its wonder, and to the approach of the spirit of God. It is to live where the veil of the unseen has been worn thin by the prayer of ages, to dwell upon the open threshold of that treasure house in which are stored the riches of knowledge and wisdom, to have our tents pitched upon the frontier line of the eternal where we can catch glimpses of its light and hear echoes of its song. This is the prerogative of the converted

soul—to see the invisible, to hear “the drift of
pinions” at his door, to look upon

the traffic of Jacob’s ladder
Pitched between heaven and Charing Cross:
and

Christ walking on the waters
Not of Gennesaret but Thames.

But this light also sheds its unearthly glory upon
this drab world of man and transfigures it. The
vision of God becomes the vision of man; and more
to the purpose than seeing Christ walking on the
Thames is to see Him in the derelicts of the Thames
Embankment. Francis Thompson’s good friend,
Mrs. Meynell, has carried his vision to a more effectual
and pregnant point :

O Christ, in this man’s life—
This stranger who is Thine—in all his strife,
All his felicity, his good and ill
In the assaulted stronghold of his will ;

I do confess Thee here,
Alive within this life ; I know Thee near
Within this lonely conscience, closed away
Within this brother’s solitary day.

Christ in his unknown heart,
His intellect unknown—this love, this art,
This battle and this peace, this destiny
That I shall never know, look upon me !

Christ in his numbered breath,
Christ in his beating heart and in his death,
Christ in his mystery ! From that secret place
And from that separate dwelling, give me grace.

V.—NEW VALUES AND NEW RELATIONS

It is this new evaluation of man that fixes the specific quality and direction of Christian conduct. We have indeed spoken much of the infinite value of the soul; and we have made all haste to save it from the awaiting pit. But this was not the reaction that Jesus called for. He bade us see the image and the superscription of the Son of Man upon every man and so carry ourselves. This doctrine of the absolute worth of the soul is the first assumption of Christianity. It is written broad and deep over the face of the New Testament. The whole weight of the Christian tradition rests upon the view that God thought man so much worth that He gave so that even He could not give more, in order to redeem him. "He spared not His own Son." And it belongs to this conception of human worth that it is wholly unaffected by those considerations which enter so deeply into men's judgments of one another. We are apt to cast whole classes of men into a sub-human category because they chance either in the circumstances of their birth or their social standing or their race to be in our view inferior to ourselves; and our judgments of men are profoundly affected by our view of their moral condition, so incorrigible is our Pharisaism. But the valuation of man by God takes account neither of the accidents of his condition nor of his moral state. Beneath all these the eye of God sees His own image, the essential man; and that is the first fixed point for all Christian thinking. Its primary postulate is the absolute worth of person-

ality ; and it seeks to order the life of men by calling them to devote themselves neither to an object of the imagination nor to an object of sense, but to what is neither and yet is both—to man himself.

And it leads us from this point to another. We are not only to accept God's evaluation of us ; but we are to bear ourselves toward such other as God has borne Himself toward us. The words commonly called the Golden Rule clearly are no more than a broad interpretation of the highest point reached in ethical perception at that time. It is "the law and the prophets." But Jesus carries us farther and deeper. For "do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you," He virtually substitutes "do unto others as God does unto you." We are to love not our neighbours only, but our enemies, "that we may be the children of our Father," who does these indiscriminating things. The same principle appears repeatedly in the Epistles. "Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ hath forgiven you." "As God hath loved us, so ought we to love one another." "Copy God, then, as His beloved children and lead lives of love just as Christ loved you."

There is no question that the word which enters most deeply into the heart of the New Testament thought of God's attitude to man is reconciliation. Propitiation and redemption are figures of speech ; and like all figures of speech accepted too literally, they have imported certain alien elements into the discussion of the matter in hand. The pagan-altar and the slave-market no doubt may yield fruitful sidelights upon the main issue ; but they are not to

be taken as precise images of the great transactions of God with the estranged soul. The word which describes those transactions directly—so far as any human word can do so—is the word “atonement” in its original connotation. The God whom we see in the New Testament is one who spends His utmost on overcoming the estrangement of His children, and restoring them to Himself in the harmony of fellowship and co-operation. It is not, be it remembered, a picture of Omar Khayyám’s God who is “a good fellow,” nor of Coventry Patmore’s sentimental Father “who has pity on our childishness.” The Christian God is not represented as taking sin so lightly and as disposing of it by the simple process of ignoring it. Reconciliation is treated in the New Testament as a transaction of infinite costliness; and it is only a shallow view of life and personality that can conceive of it as a facile condonation of offences. It is never that, even in our imperfect human relationships. There is a certain temperamental levity which can shake off the remembrance of injury with a toss of the head, and in a casual moment shake hands and let bygones be bygones. But the restoration of a broken friendship is not so cheaply purchased. Where the offence cuts deepest, forgiveness is most costly—especially if it be carried through to a perfect end. Jesus in one of his parables likens sin to a bad debt, and the forgiveness of sin to the cancellation of the debt; but it is even more than that. It is to restore the debtor to his former position, to resume business with him on the old terms. It is not mere release or absolutism; it is the positive recreation of a disrupted harmony, so

that the new shall be even better and richer than the old. This is not a thing that *happens*; it requires set purpose and energy. No man drifts into forgiveness; forgiveness needs the will to forgive.

But in the New Testament account of reconciliation, the will to forgive is not represented as waiting upon the penitence of the offender. It does not bide its time till the delinquent comes back; it goes out to bring him back. It deliberately endeavours to quicken repentance; and does not leave the restoration to chance or to the caprice of the offender. The Father of Jesus Christ makes it as nearly impossible as it may be for the offender to stay away; and the whole strength of the appeal of the Gospel rests upon the assumption that the whole mind and heart of God are gathered up in His purpose to recreate His fellowship with His creatures.

This is quite clearly reflected in Jesus's view of the mutual relations of men. He has much to say about offences and forgiveness; and what he does say is quite explicit—both to the offender and to the offended. The offender has to make restitution to his brother before his offering is acceptable to God; and the offended brother has to forgive the offender if he is to receive the forgiveness of God. Rightness with God and rightness with man go consistently together. But just as God seeks out the occasion of forgiveness, so also is the offended man to go forth to create the conditions of reconciliation with his offending neighbour. This is the whole meaning of the passage concerning the turning of the other cheek. "Resist not evil" said

Jesus; and what He meant was "Do not waste your time in resisting evil; your business is to overcome and convert the evil will; and when a man strikes you on one cheek, you must overcome the evil in him, not by breaking his head, but by that more fundamental thing—breaking his heart. Abstain not only from revenge, but from the appearance of resentment. Counter and conquer your adversary by an unconquerable goodwill." As St. Paul puts it, "Heap coals of fire on his head."

The way in which Jesus treats this matter of offences affords a clue to the essential principle of the ethics of the Kingdom. Mutuality, reciprocity, fellowship—here is the rule. Professor Rauschenbusch's definition of love comes to mind again—*"the energy of a steadfast will bent on creating fellowship."* Reconciliation as between God and man is a great social transaction; and this transaction—in every possible variation and application—is to be reproduced in human relationships. The Kingdom of God is a society of men who give themselves to each other in "love without a limit." This presupposes that new view of man which has already been spoken of and which establishes him as the end of life for his brother. The supreme "value" for men is *man*. The other man is a personality to which I am to give my all, a brother to be bound to myself in consistent and infrangible good-will. No matter who or what he is—he is to be the object of my devotion. His standing, his nationality, his moral condition—none of these is of any account. The true Christian is he who can take on his lips and make his own his Master's word, "Him that

cometh to Me"—be he "tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, rich man, poor man, beggar-man, thief"—
"him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."
The Christian ethic is an affair of redemptive personal relationships. The natural reaction of a genuine Christian life is the creation of a living, life giving fellowship.

CHAPTER VI

JUDGMENT AND MERCY

ANATOLE FRANCE, in a striking story, describes Pontius Pilate, grown old and obese, taking a summer cure at a Roman watering-place ; and, in answer to a friend, only recalling faintly and with difficulty the trial and execution of Jesus. To the political mind it was no more than a troublesome affair well and finally disposed of by throwing its cause to the yelping hounds that wanted Him for a prey. Even now, when we reflect, with some measure of detachment, upon the actual circumstances, it seems singular that the squalid and contemptible end of an obscure peasant in an obscure land should have become the master-fact of human history.

The truth is that the instinct of mankind discerns certain elements in this episode which are not to be measured by the common foot-rule of historical judgment. We seem to move here in a region of absolute moral values, where circumstances of time and place, of publicity and obscurity, of size and numbers, sink into a position of relative unimportance. The event is historical, but it is also super-historic. It moves on a plane of timelessness. The first but certainly the least thing that we say of the Cross is that it happened on a certain day at a certain place. The date of the Cross is not a particular day, but all time ; the local setting of the Cross is not Jerusalem, but the round earth. The Cross is the supreme moral crisis of the world, the epitome and symbol of its moral tragedy, and of its hope.

I.—THE NECESSITY OF THE CROSS

The shadow of the Cross is cast over the whole recorded life of Jesus ; and in a very profound sense, Joseph Parker's saying that "on earth He was never off the Cross" is true. But it is possible to fix with some precision the point at which Jesus saw clearly that there could be no other issue to His ministry than a violent death at the hands of the guardians of the *status quo* and of the ancient traditions. He was too deeply versed in the story of the prophets to suppose that He would escape their fate. He saw that the Son of Man "must go up to Jerusalem . . . and be crucified," and a moment came when He set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem.

Professor Burkitt has pointed out that the first turning-point in the public ministry of Jesus came on the Sabbath-day on which He healed the man with the withered hand in the synagogue. On that day Jesus left the synagogue, and only once, and that in his own town of Nazareth, did he enter the synagogue again. This new departure appears to signify a definite abandonment on Jesus's part of the hope which underlay the synagogue ministry—that the Kingdom of God could be floated on the tide of a religious revival within the existing religious institutions. He had gone through the synagogues of Calilee preaching the Kingdom ; but the traditionalists grew increasingly hostile, until that fateful Sabbath-day when the opposition reached a climax and drove Jesus out into the open world, like many a prophet before Him and after. He saw that as

things were, His Good News of vision and emancipation was falling on ears not only unhearing but unwilling to hear. It is true that the common people heard him gladly ; but it is idle to base upon this single saying, as sometimes we do, an argument of His abiding acceptability to the multitude. Of course the people heard Him gladly. The oppressed multitude is always ready to turn its ear to any man who comes to it with a word of hope, however illusory it may be. This is what gives the quack, the charlatan, the demagogue, his chance. Jesus, like every prophet, had his periods of favour at the hands of the very populace which at last demanded His death. So little did He Himself esteem the fervour which His first preaching had evoked that He deliberately withdrew from the only circumstances in which He might have gained a popular following. At the last, He had around Him but a handful of people who understood and believed in Him. So far as His own peculiar mission was concerned, it was understood by the people as little as it was liked by the authorities.

For this there were probably many reasons ; it was no doubt in part due to the disappointing form of the nationalistic hope. Jesus did not correspond to the expectation of a strong captain, a leader of hosts who would rally the people around a banner of liberty, overthrow the Roman tyranny and re-establish the political independence of the nation. There was also the inveterate hostility of the traditionalist to innovation, of the official to the unaccredited. But beneath and through these things was the radical egoism which had divided that

society, as it divides every society, Economically, it was a self-devouring society, a people who lived off each other. It was deadlier than the economic disintegration which was the moral schism that rent them in twain—the self-placency of the religious and their contempt of the outcast. The parable of the Pharisee and the publican gives us a picture of malignant social leprosy; and however pernicious a thing economic exploitation may be, it is comparatively innocuous by the side of the spiritual pride that can throw the outcast into a sub-human category and exalt the Pharisee of ostracism to the plane of a grace. It is characteristic of Jesus that He immediately made common cause with the outcast. It was laid to Him by the "unco' guid" that He "sat with publicans and sinners." But this He did, not because the publicans and sinners had more virtue than their contemptuous neighbours, but because they had more need. To Jesus it was enough that they were outcast. They were the proper objects of an impulse which made for the creation of fellowship and the inclusion of the "outs" in a family of God.

It must not be overlooked in this connection, that Jesus in speaking of his mission described Himself consistently as the Son of Man; and if we are to take it that not only the name but its symbolic meaning is derived from Daniel's vision, we must further assume that Jesus regarded Himself as the symbol and protagonist of humanity against all dehumanizing things. "The Son of Man," and "the Kingdom of God" must not be separated from one another. When He claimed that the Son

of Man was Lord of the Sabbath, He was affirming the primacy of humanity in the Kingdom of God. This does not mean that He was only a humanist ; on the contrary, He was as far removed as possible from that insidious humanism which has invaded popular religion in our day and which makes God ancillary to human ends. But Jesus's thought of the place of man in the divine purpose made him a humanist in the sense that He believed God's ends could only be achieved through a redeemed human society. He does not indeed say it in so many words, but it is a fair inference from His word and attitudes that the Kingdom of God implied a vision of mankind integrated into an organic co-operative whole by the cohesive energy of a love which denied itself to no man. But this regenerated society was made impossible by the deadly and blinding egoism which not only was eating into the social body like a leprosy, but also made men incapable of perceiving those spiritual values which break the power of secular good, and set free the creative and integrating activities of love.

When Jesus, after His breach with the synagogue, went into retirement with His little company of disciples, it was assuredly no less to think out His own personal problem than to train the twelve. His first approach to His task had been foiled by the perversity of men ; and He perceived that if this obstruction was to be broken down, there was need of some method more drastic than preaching. It is something more than conjecture to suppose that His sense of necessity—that He *must* go to Jerusalem—was born of the conviction that the

only plan which would enable Him to overcome the obstinate waywardness of His brethren was to show them their sin in its ultimate consequence, to let their sin work out its logic to the bitter end. Then perchance they would discern what it was that ailed them.

It is likely that Jesus was helped to this conclusion by reflecting upon the experience of the prophets and upon the picture of "the suffering servant" of God. But it seems clear that He deliberately accepted for Himself the position of *foil* to the mounting sin of His brethren. He set His face steadfastly toward Jerusalem because He chose to reveal to men the nature of their moral trouble by suffering in His own person its utmost consequences before their eyes. And so at last it came to pass.

What happened to Jesus had in kind happened before. It had happened to Jeremiah, it happened wheresoever a prophet was stoned. The same thing is happening to-day. The sin of man is working out its remorseless logic on the battlefields of Europe. But the Cross has its own uniqueness. Historical judgments upon human sin—such as the present war—are seen through the haze of human imperfections in a twilight of mixed motives of good and evil; and the innocent suffer with the guilty. But when sin broke upon Jesus, it was seen in its true colour, darkness against light, black against white with no blurred edges and no twilight zone; and the innocent suffered alone. It is this which invests the Cross with a super-historic quality; it is a revelation of something like absolute moral values. Hell seemed to be burning through in Jerusalem

that day. The mask was off and sin stalked the streets and swarmed the hill in all its black horror ; and over against it was the moral splendour of the Crucified.

The death of Jesus was the logical end of sin, the fated conclusion of its natural reactions. In the destruction of the Son of Man, the incarnation of essential manhood, we have the eternal symbol of the anti-social nature and effects of sin. It gathered itself up to extinguish the spirit of love in which alone is the hope of our healing. The Cross was not alone a denial of and an affront to the divine holiness ; it was that, truly ; but it was that because it was first an assault upon man, an a denial of the love by which it is ordained that man shall live and grow. The crucifixion of Jesus remains the supreme instance and symbol of that contempt of personality which is the first reaction of egoism and the unchanging hindrance to fellowship. The Cross is the whole wide tragedy of mankind focussed down to one single point of darkness.

But the Cross revealed much more than the truth about sin. In the annals of human suffering there is surely no story comparable to the deliberate, systematic, pitiless crucifixion of the Polish people. For a century it has gone on ; and the mounting tale of a nation's anguish was reproduced in the hearts of its exiled sons. Some of these it drove back upon God ; and as they were pressed more closely to the heart of God, bitterness and vengefulness died within them, and out of their hearts came echoing the last word of the heart of God. Sygmunt Krasinski, in whom Polish idealism reached its high-

water mark, sings his latest songs to the key of the everlasting mercy. This is his clearest, his conquering note, the thing that he learnt at the heart of God.

And above the confusion of Calvary, through all the tumult and the clamour of the mob, there came a word, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Above the noise of Hell was heard the conquering word of the everlasting mercy—the last word of God over against the worst deed of man. There is a note of the ultimate in this prayer to which human hearts have never ceased to respond, recognizing in it a depth and a reach of charity essentially divine. It has come down the ages as the most godlike word that ever fell on human hearing. For all the infamy, the lust, the blindness which broke upon the Son of Man and which is for ever laying waste this fair world of our inheritance, God has this final word of mercy. When sin had done its worst and its utmost, Mercy held the field. The Cross is the everlasting mercy focussed down to one glorious word of life.

II.—THE CROSS THE CENTRE OF FELLOWSHIP

It is essentially a sound instinct that has found in the Cross God's reaction to sin, His way of solving the moral problem of the world.

We may perhaps best realize the nature of God's way of solving the problem of moral evil by contrasting it with our own. We show in our attitude to crime our characteristic human way of dealing with moral evil. Our method of dealing with crime

has in it two elements : judgment and punishment. We first ascertain the fact and assess the measure of the crime ; then we inflict a commensurate punishment on the criminal. By this we have secured a certain immunity for society from the activities of that particular criminal, and we have probably deterred a number of poor spirits from like crime. The one thing we have not done is to solve the moral problem involved in crime. For what we have done to the criminal by our present penal methods is either to harden him or to break him. We have either made him a greater menace to society than he was before ; or we have turned him into a shuffling parasite. So far from solving the moral problem, we have only aggravated it ; and this discovery is transforming penology to-day.

God's method, like ours, begins in judgment, and that is, as we have seen, the first element in the meaning of the Cross. God deals with us on a basis of stark moral realism. He reveals sin to us in its true character, and no man even to this day can look upon the Cross understandingly without realizing that he has been found out. The Cross classifies him—shows him where he stands. "Now is the Judgment of this world," said Jesus. In Jesus, St. Paul tells us, God "declared His righteousness," and over against that unsparing background the sin of the world stands for ever revealed and therefore condemned.

But after judgment, mercy. That is the final meaning of the Cross. Sin is alienation ; God meets it by reconciliation. His reaction to sin is the gift of forgiveness freely and royally given,

without money and without price. God's vengeance is forgiveness ; God's revenge is reconciliation. God's punishment is pardon ; this is the intolerable retribution of love

And it is this mercy that overcomes our human contumacy. Shakespeare understood human nature more than most men :

Your gentleness shall force
More than your force move us to gentleness.

We could stand the rod ; what no properly constituted soul can stand, is mercy. It is mercy that breaks us down and brings us to repentance and a changed heart.

The Cross stands out therefore as the manifestation of the divine will to reconciliation, as the symbol and source of a grace which binds man to God in the harmony of willing and loving service. It is centrally the revealing of that will to fellowship which is the deepest thing in the heart of God, and is the ground-plan of the universe. And "as God hath loved us, so ought we to love one another."

So the Cross stands out as the spring and rallying-point of our hopes of a redeemed society. Not by might or by majorities shall we create the world of our dreams, but by the quickening within us and within all men of the grace of social healing and integration at the foot of the Cross. Here is the blood of Jesus which cleanses us from all sin and redeems our life from destruction. For us who with high hope to-day hail the future, our standing ground, our sign, our ruling passion must be the Cross of Christ. *In hoc signo, vincemus.*

EPILOGUE

I.—TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

ON the whole, the Lady Ecclesia has, throughout her history, been more evilly entreated in the house of her friends than in that of her enemies ; and in these latter days certain of her most devoted servants have done her the ill-service of enticing her into the sterile by-paths of apocalyptic guesswork. Human nature has in it an incorrigible eschatological strain ; and in times of crisis and momentous happening this bias is apt to run amuck with the whole man. Apocalyptic is nothing other than Micawberism turned tragic ; and it does us the infinite harm of habiting the true God in the unreal vestments of a *deus ex machina*

Let us acknowledge gratefully the elements of good in the apocalyptic temper. Essentially it is the retort of a religious faith to political pessimism ; and it is good that we should be reminded at such a time as this, when the schemes of men have gone so tragically " agley," that the last word is still with God. But the man who supposes that God has violent designs upon the historical order is living in a fool's paradise. It is true that He is not tied down to the slow processes of history ; and by His grace it is on due occasion given to man to hustle history. But the divine order is not appointed to drop ready-made from the clouds.

The essential truth for us in the apocalyptic hope is that the Son of Man is always ready to come into the world with the grace of renewal and uplifting,

whensoever there be a prophetic remnant among men ready to receive him. He has come again and again in this way in the course of history, to reinforce mankind in its ceaseless struggle into light and liberty. Once more He may be at the door. Perchance in the present insurgency of the working folk there is a sign of His coming in power.

May it not be that His star has already appeared—as before, in the East? The Russian rising has in it many baffling elements; but there is some ground for thinking that behind it is a genuine religious impulse. We may not forget that the soil which produced the Russian Revolution raised the one great religious seer of our time, Lyof Tolstoi; and no soil has been more open to his sowing than that out of which he himself grew. It may be that when the clouds and the dust have been swept away we shall see that Dostoievsky's prediction has come true. Speaking of the "inmost essence and the ultimate destiny of the Russian nation," he says, "Russia must reveal to the world her own Russian Christ, whom as yet the peoples know not. . . . There lies, I believe, the inmost essence of our vast impending contribution to civilization whereby we shall awaken the European peoples: there lies the inmost core of our exuberant and intense existence that is to be." Perhaps that hour has struck, did we but know it.

However that may be, we are on the eve of change, a change vast and deep. The wage-earning classes, at last aware of their strength, are rising to claim their inheritance of life and liberty. "That European sham called civilization" (to quote Dostoievsky

once more) which has rested upon the subordination of the proletariat, shaken and shattered by the war, is about to receive its *coup de grâce* at the horny hand of insurgent labour. The course of this conflict it is not given to man to predict; but its final issue is certain, though this generation may not live to see it. The common people are at last coming into their Kingdom.

The Church of Christ has never been called to make a decision more critical than concerning the part it is to play in this impending change. It has thrown away its right to protest against violence by its benediction of violence in the Great War; and if it be tempted to essay a quelling of the coming storm by unctuous counsel of moderation, of reasonableness, of a spirit of conciliation, and the like, it must be ready to have its war-time performances thrown back in its teeth. For obviously it cannot bless violence against the Hun and damn violence against the predatory capitalist. However, let us hope (as we justly may) that the coming revolution may run its course without the need of this perilous counsel.

The real danger of the Church is that this tide of life may sweep past without touching it, and leave it stranded high and dry. I speak, of course, of the organized Church; for the true Church is always at the heart of life. A writer commenting upon the formation of a New Labour Party in England daringly quoted the Scripture: "A Body hast Thou prepared for Me." Perhaps he was right. In which case, so much the worse for the Church. Yet we may not forget that the Church has been entrusted

with the one word which may make all the difference to the social revolution between being a hard and bitter struggle and a splendid crusade for the creation of a living society. It holds the real key to this crisis—if it can but find the means of using it

Perhaps the most significant phenomenon in the course of the Welsh Revival was the ferment of reconciliation which accompanied it. Old feuds were composed; old hatchets buried. It was a season of social healing and renewal. This was as it should be; its only failure was that it did not go deep enough and far enough. But it was a real suggestion of the appointed social reaction of a vision of the Kingdom of God; and it is a hint from which the Church may gain much light on its task to-day. For the solvent of feuds among Rhondda colliers is no less the solvent of class antagonisms. *It is only a vision of the Kingdom of God that can avert the danger of a disastrous class-war.*

This vision it is the office of the Church to communicate; and because the vision hangs on a change of heart, it is the immediate task of the Church to bid all men—of whatever class or station—to *repent*. And if the preacher be silenced by the inertia of the comfortable and the orthodox, then it is a matter of life and death to him that he carry this prophetic word out into the open world. And it is not at all unlikely that if he give to this word its full content, he may presently find himself crying in the wilderness—yet not to shrubs and stones, for the people will flock to him as they did to the prophet by Jordan long ago. The truth is that there must be a revolution in the Church itself if it is to save and hallow

the revolution in the commonwealth. First of all and most of all, it must recover the prophetic note and utter it—at whatever cost to its external fabric. The present organization of the Church belongs to a day already dead; and now as ever the new wine may burst the old wine-skins. But what does that matter, if only the Church can speak the word that the hour needs?

And surely the hour itself is telling us what that word must be. "Our task," said Lamennais, "is the creation of peoples"; and to this end, the Church must go to man with *its living word, clean purged of the banalities of a cheap and easy salvationism on the one hand, and of the genial futilities of a culture-Gospel on the other, by being centred upon a Kingdom of God, whose ground-plan is the Cross, whose door is conversion, whose law is fellowship, with an evangelism which will send men binding their brethren to themselves in the unity of a life-giving and redeeming fellowship with the same eagerness and haste as in times past they have fled from the wrath to come.*

To this word, men's hearts will rise eagerly and gladly; and in such a tide of spiritual renewal, may we not justly discern the coming of the Son of Man? These are dark and desolate days, but such days are the characteristic background of the historical comings of the Son of Man in power. The anguish that men have suffered, the insolvency of man-made policies, the relapse of civilized peoples into barbarism, the broken hearts and the desolated homes of a continent—these things are creating a "famine of the hearing of the word of the Lord." This wide need surely presages one of the days of

the Son of Man ; but will His people be willing in the day of His power ?

When the nations lie in blood, and their Kings a broken brood,
Look up, O most sorrowful of daughters ;
Lift up thy head and hark what sounds are in the breeze,
For His feet are coming to thee on the waters !

Truly the Bridegroom cometh. But what of the Bride ? Will she be ready ? Is she going to live in her past, swathing her mind in her traditions and feeding her heart upon her memories, going about obsolete tasks in a world that has forged ahead into a new life in which she has no share ? Or will she give herself to take her place in the coming advance, marching in the van of the great host that is going in to possess the promised land of larger life and wider liberty ?

II.—TO THE PEOPLE

Your day at last has come ; and amid the bloody desolation of this time, the one cheering sign is the awakening of the people. The dark days in which you and your children could be exploited for the profit and the pleasure of the few, and be led like lambs to the slaughter to gratify the vanity of kings or to further the ends of selfish statecraft—those days are over. You are about to take the affairs of the world into your hands. Milton, in one of his great passages, describes England as “ a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man

after sleep and shaking her invincible locks"; and a man who looks abroad upon the world with some imagination to-day may see such another picture in the rising of the working-classes. You know your power at last; and you are preparing to use it.

But may one whose heart beats with yours in hope and expectation propound to you the question: This power, *how* are you going to use it? You are going to recast the existing order; but what kind of order are you going to set up instead?

Broadly there are two alternatives before you

The first is the class-war, which can only end in the institution of a new class-ascendancy. If you want to become top-dogs, you can easily do so. But what you have to bear in mind is that if you only effect a revolution within the existing political and social framework, you are not extirpating the evil thing which has been the cause of your miseries. You are leaving it where it will still grow its dismal fruit of social disintegration. You will have on your hands a society in which the old leprosy is still active; and the co-operative commonwealth of your dreams will be as far away as ever. You may destroy capitalism; but that is only to remove the symptom. You have not eradicated the disease. And if you leave the disease, it will in time create another anti-social monster under which your children's children may be groaning more loudly than you have groaned under the burden of capitalism.

The alternative to the class-war is more difficult to state. But I return to Lamennais's phrase—"the creation of peoples." "We must," said that

prophet on another occasion, "lay in advance the foundations of a new society." A class-war can effect no more than a change of clothing; what we need to set before us is the creation of a new body.

So far as I understand the Labour Movement, this positive ideal is already implicit in its programme. Its international outlook shows that it has overleaped the old sundering walls of nationality. For the awakened worker, the race line is rapidly disappearing. But the impulse of fellowship which is creating this international solidarity is, I believe, too strong to be stopped at this achievement. It is bound in its stride to overleap the class line no less decisively. The outstanding symbol of class division in the modern world is capitalism; and the onslaught upon the capitalistic system while it may be chiefly actuated by resentment and hostility is inherently a step in the direction of a unified social order. The great thing is that it should be conceived and thought of in that generous light—not as the bone of contention between top-dogs and under-dogs, but as an anti-social phenomenon which deprives both top-dog and under-dog of their inheritance of real life. The abolition of capitalism is as necessary to the rich as to the poor. For is it not written that they who have riches can only with difficulty enter the Kingdom of Heaven? It is a question not of our attitude to a system but to men. Let us hate the system deeply and invincibly; let us assault the dividing wall with an implacable energy; but let us remember that the people on the other side of the wall are—*men*. And our business is to create a society which will not be complete

or healthy except as these others enter it on the same term as ourselves.

What we must have is a profound reverence for manhood, expressing itself in an indomitable will to fellowship. It is not at all to the point to say that the privileged classes will not see the matter in the same light as we do, or that in the past they have not treated common folk on this plane of reverence and fellowship. That may be true; but it does not alter our obligation to them. Even if they treat us as enemies, we must treat them as friends and brothers. And that will be the real test of the moral quality of the revolution. If it be charged with such a temper as this, it possesses the abiding foundations of a mighty society. It will carry the sign of the Cross, it will be four-square with the plan of the Universe; it will bear the image and the superscription of God.

In first intention the social revolution is a means of economic emancipation. But we shall not allow ourselves to forget that liberty standing alone is never safe or full. With liberty there must go a deep social passion. For the single watchword *Freedom*, we must, as I have already said, substitute the double watchword—*Freedom and Fellowship*; and remember that the will to fellowship must be true to itself through everything—so true to itself that it will count no man an enemy to be defeated, but a brother to be won; and will go forth with an unconquerable patience to create a society in which there shall be no rancour or hate or self-seeking, no bitterness of partisanship or any other divisive thing, but a great and willing co-operation in the

making of men and in the enrichment of life. To set out in this spirit is truly to nail the Red Cap to the Cross.

William Blake saw afar off the building of Jerusalem "in England's green and pleasant land," but the Jerusalem of his vision is truly as wide as the world :

The stones are pity, and the bricks well-wrought affections,
Enamel'd with love and kindness, and the tiles engraven
gold—

Labour of merciful hands ; the beams and rafters are forgiveness ;

The mortar and the cement of the work, tears of honesty,
the nails

And the screws and iron braces, are well-wrought blandishments,

And well-contrived words, firm fixing, never forgotten,
Always comforting the remembrance ; the floors humility ;
The ceilings, devotion ; the hearts thanksgiving ;

Go on, build as in hope.

And it is with some such vision as this before us
that we shall lay truly and well the foundations
of that Kingdom of Man which is none other than
the Kingdom of God.

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